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A
GOSPEL-GLASS,

Representing the
MISCARRIAGES
OF
English Professors ;
OR A
CALL from HEAVEN
TO
SINNERS and SAINTS:

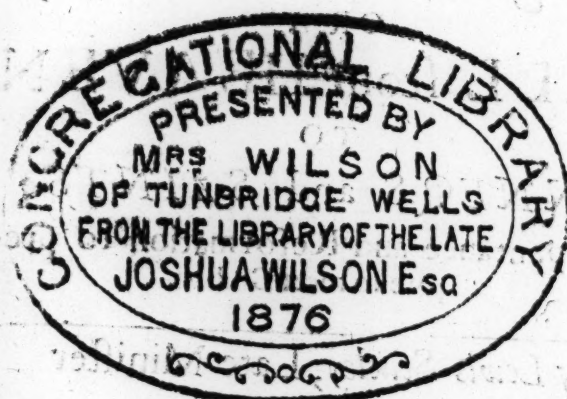
By Repentance and Reformation to pre-
pare to meet God.

0781
By *Lewis Stucley*, Late Minister
in *Exeter*.

Lev. 19. 17. *Thou shalt not hate thy Brother in thine heart ; Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy Neighbour, and not suffer Sin upon him.*

Jer. 2. 35. *Yet thou sayest, Because I am innocent surely his anger shall turn from me : Behold, I will plead with thee, because thou sayest, I have not sinned.*

London, Printed for the Author, and are to
be sold by *Giles Widdowes* at the Maiden-head
in *Aldersgate-street*, near *Jewen-street*. 1670.





THE
Authors
PREFACE.



WHEN it is a day of
darknesse and of
gloominess, a day of
clouds, and of thick
darkness, *then (saith
the Prophet)* Blow
ye the Trumpet in
Zion, and sound an Alarum in my holy Joel 2. 1;
Mountain: Let all the Inhabitants of ^{2.}
the Land tremble. How hath the
Lord covered the Daughter of Zion Lam. 2. 1;
with a Cloud in his anger, and cast
down from Heaven unto the Earth
the beauty of *Israel*, and remembered
not his Foot-stool in the day of his
A 2 anger?

- V. 6. anger ? He hath violently taken away his Tabernacle, as if it were of a Garden ; he hath destroyed the Places of the Assembly : The Lord hath caused the solemn Feasts and Sabbaths to be forgotten in Zion, and hath despised in the indignation of his anger *his* Priests. Yea, the Lord hath cast off his Altar, he hath obhorred his Sanctuary, the Law is no more, her Prophets also find no Vision from the Lord. *O that now mine eyes could fail with tears, and my bowels were more troubled within me !*
- V. 7.
- V. 9.
- V. 11. *O that my Liver were poured upon the Earth for the destruction of the Daughter of my People, because the Children and the Sucklings swoon in the streets of the City ! We see not our Signs, there is no more any Prophet, neither is there among us any that knoweth How Long.*
- Psal. 74 9.

2 Sam. 6.
1, 2.

When we, like David, were restoring the Ark of God, I mean, the presence of Christ, in his Worship and Ordinances, what Stumblings of the Oxen have we seen ? What miserable Disappointments have we met with ? And what sad breaches have there

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there been made? How hath God stopt our way, and branded our Enterprises with wonderful remarks of his sore displeasure?

Hear therefore the word of the Lord, ye Children of Israel, for the Lord hath a Controversie with the Inhabitants of the Land. We poor Ministers have pleaded with you, till we can plead no more: the Lord hath bid us stand by, whilst he himself takes up the Controversie. O is it not a feartul thing to fall into the hands of the living God? Are you not sensible what Arrows God hath begun to shoot amongst us? How many thousands, and ten thousands hath he taken away as with a whirlwind by the Pestilence? For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still. How hath God shaken our Heavens, and our Earth; the Sea, as well as dry Land? How doth he contend still by the sword? And how much precious blood hath the Earth and Sea drunk up? For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

Hos. 4. 1.

Heb. 10.

31.

Psal. 58. 9.

Isa. 5. 25.]

Hag. 2. 6.

Psal 46. 6.

O! Come, Behold the works of
A 2 the

V. 6.

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V. 7.

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still.

O! Come, Behold the works of Psal 46. 6.
the

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the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the Earth. Every Providence of God, (especially his more notable Acts) hath a reason written upon it, could mans eye read it. When the Church complained that God

Jer. 14. 8,
10.

was as a stranger in the Land, and as a wayfaring man, that turneth aside to tarry for a night: The Lord replies to them, Thus have they loved to wander, &c. The Controversie began on their side: they may see their Sin in the Punishment, as in a Glass. Do they wonder I grow strange to them? The estrangement began on their part. Nothing appears more our instant Duty, than to enter a serious scrutiny, What have we done?

Lam. 3.

40, 41, 44.

Wherein have we offended? Let us search and try our wayes, (saith the afflicted Church of Judah, upon this very occasion, of the Lords covering himself with a Cloud, that their Prayers could not pass through) and turn again to the Lord. Let us lift up our heart, with our hands, unto God in the Heavens.

Hag. 1. 5. 7.

Isa. 59. 2.

O! Consider your wayes: The Lord doubleth it, Your iniquities have separated between you and your God,

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God, and your sins have *hid* his face from you, that he will not hear.

I find men will easily subscribe to this, that Sin is the procuring cause of all misery ; but I find an aptness to transferr the guilt from one to another, from one party to another ; and though people do even sell themselves to work wickedness, yet so predominant is Self-love, that it sees no spots in it self. Ahab is not the troubler of Israel, but Elijah: Nay, a good man, Aaron excuseth himself, and layes the blame on others. The Sin is theirs, not mine. Men have a natural desire to justifie themselves, and their desire is so strong, that they care not whom they bespatter or burden, so they may but ease and acquit themselves.

Exod. 32.
22.

And indeed, Sin is such an ugly Monster, that no man will own it, of he can choose ; but had rather lay this Child of Darknes at any mans door, yea at Gods, than Father it himself.

My Design in this Enterprize, is, to obviate this Distemper, and to bring you, all of you, to own your iniquity ; that you may say (resolve upon it)
that

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Pfal. 32. 5. that you will confess your iniquity, that so God may forgive the iniquity of your sin. My Place, and Duty, as a Minister (though wholly unworthy of that Relation to God and you)
Ezek. 16. 2. binds me to cause Jerusalem to know her abominations ; and therefore I have descended to Particulars, that, if it be the will of God, I might hit the humour, and shew to every man the plague of his own heart.
1 Kings 8. 38.

The Lord knoweth, I take no pleasure to rake in these Dunghills : I dread the ill uses, that the sons of Belial may make of this Enterprize : I expect various Censures from them, who should be otherwise minded ; but my record is on high, that the great Design of this Publication is, to reduce Professors to a more awful, humble, serious Repentance towards God, and singular Conversation before men.

*Vox clau-
 rantis in
 Deserto.
 B, S.S. 2.*

I thank God for the freedom that a Reverend Brother hath taken with the ejected Ministers : and I must profess, that since the perusal of that most seasonable Piece, I have had no quiet in my Conscience, till I entred upon this Labour. Though my bodily Distempers leaded loud for my silence ; though I
was

Preface.

was told, the prudent should hold their peace in an evil day; though I know 'tis an unthankful office to admonish and reprove, &c. Yet I have laid by all Impediments and Objections that Self was obtruding; and wish I had such gifts, and such affections, and such a discerning of the hearts and lives of Professors, as might render me some way useful, to put you upon self-reflection, upon self-tryal in order to a full Repentance: I pray God, I may so far at least succeed, as to obstruct that cursed exclaiming against the sins of Governours; and the sins of divided Parties, as at length to make you cry out, What have I done? O! how have I provoked God?

Out of pity to your souls have I undertaken this subject: Our pangs, like those of a travailling Woman, are hastening: the Clouds are swelling, I am loth they should fall on you in a secure and impenitent condition, I am not ashamed to tell you, that I foresee foul weather; and I would you should be in readiness for boisterous Seas. I know nothing save guilt will then sink your hearts: the load of affliction will be so heavy and hard upon you, that
I would

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I would have nothing else (not the load of millions of unrepented sins) at the same time, to press down. Sins unrepented of, will soon, as poyson, drink up your spirits. If sin be confessed, and repented of, if God hath forgiven, no matter what loads lye upon the back, seeing no guilt lyes upon the Conscience.

Having given you an account of my Design, and the reason of it, I shall only add,

1. *That it may not be expected I should give you a full Catalogue of all your sins, which are provocations in the eyes of the Lord this day. Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me (and the Land) from all our secret, as well as known, faults.*

*Psal. 19.
12.*

2. *God forbid I should be so censorious, as to judge all Professors guilty of these sins, in all the Particularities, or in all the Aggravations of them. Some are to be charged one way, some another; few can wash their hands in innocency, that they are no wayes Principals or Accessories.*

3. *Far be it from me to be partial in my Charge, to advance any Faction of men upon the ruines of their Brethren.*

4. *I desire you would take this Catalogue into*

Preface.

into your Closets with you, and as you read, set a special mark of observation on those sins, which are chiefly yours, in order to repentance, and amendment, and then give the Lord no rest, till he hath took his Pen, and dipt it in the blood of his Son, and blotted them out of his Diary, and remembrance.

And Lastly, Let me beseech the Reader, to be very importunate with the Lord, for an humble, tender spirit; that prejudice, unbelief, and hardness of heart, may not accompany him in the perusal of the following lines, and thereby, both his, and my own endeavours, become abortive.

5.

L. S.

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A brief Account of what may be
be expected in the following
Treatise, by a Friend to the
Author and Reader.

Professor, in this necessary and seasonable Gospel Glass, there are many sad, but useful Sights for thee.

First, Wouldst thou know *what may be seen*? I'll tell thee; Herein the Miscarriages of Professors (and therefore of thine own self) are enumerated and aggravated. The Sins enumerated are either against the Law and Gospel jointly, or against the Gospel and Law severally.

Professors Sins against the Law and Gospel jointly, are hinted in the first Chapter, which shews their *Regardlessness of their own and others Souls*.

Their Sins against the Gospel more peculiarly, are spoken to in the seven next Chapters. The 2d. shews their *Want of saving Conviction and Compunction*: the 3d. their *Want of Despair in Self*: the 4th. their *Miscarriages about Soul-troubles*, the four following Chapters, their *Miscarriages about believing in Christ*: the 5th. their *Ignorance of Christ, serving their turns of Christ, making base Capitulations with him*:
the

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the 6th. their *Delays* to close with Christ: the 7th. their *Taking Christ* partially, without conjugal Affections, and without considering the Cost they may be at: the 8th. their *Shuffling* together false Signs of closing with Christ.

Their Sins against the Law more peculiarly, are either against the First or Second Table. Their Sins against the First Table (under the Head of *Ungodliness*) are discovered in the Eleven following Chapters. The 9th. shews their *Ignorance and Errors*: the 10th. their *Want of Love* to God: the 11. their *Evil Surmises* of God: the 12. their *Unthankfulness*: the 13th. their *Neglect of Prayer*, especially of Secret, both *Ejaculatory and Closet-Prayer*: the 14. their *Miscarriages* about their Prayers: the 15. their *Slighting* the written Word of God, especially in not reading and meditating on it as they ought: the 16th. their *Miscarriages* about the Promises: the 17th. their *Abuse of Providence*: the 18th. their *Hypocrisie*: the 19th. their *Sabbath-Sins*.

Their Sins against the Second Table, are either *Personal* or *Relative*.

Their *Personal* Sins are evinted in the four next Chapters. The 20th. shews their *Miscarriages* about *Self-tryal*: the 21st. their *Pride*: the 22d. their *Gluttony*: the 23d. their *Idleness*.

Their *Relative* Sins are spoken to in the Fourteen following Chapters. The 24th. shews their *Unmercifulness*: the 25th. their *Unrighteousness*, or *Unfaithfulness in Trading*: the 26th. *Covetousness*: the 27th. their *Envy*: the 28th. their Sins as *Superiours*: the 29th. as *Husbands or Wives*: the 30th. as *Parents or Children*: the 31st.

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31st. as Masters or Servants : the 32d. their Miscarriages towards Ministers, before their silencing: the 33d. Since their Silencing: the 34th. their Miscarriages towards Sinners.

The Aggravations of their Miscarriages, that are here enumerated, thou hast in the two next Chapters. The 37. shews their *Dis-ingenuity and Scandalousness* : the 38th. their *Sinuing against Knowledge, and impenitently, notwithstanding all means to bring them unto Repentance.*

Secondly, Wouldst thou know, and that experimentally, *How useful* such Sights, may be unto thy Soul ? Read diligently the two last Chapters. The 39th. shews, *What Use thou shouldst make of this Glass* : and the 40th. *What Reason there is thou shouldst make such Use thereof.*

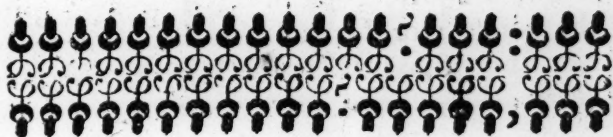
And now, Conscientious Reader, (so I stile thee, because I hope thou resolvest so to be) having given thee this brief Account of what thou maist expect in the following excellent Treatise, I cannot but assure thee, that if thou bringest hither with thee a *serious* and *teachable* Spirit, desirous to have thy Soul searched to the quick, and the sores thereof launched, and thoroughly cured, thou wilt not lose thy cost and pains : The closeness and *pythiness* of the Compilement, will not only please ; but the Materials, so full of *Spiritual vigour*, and *Scriptural-experience*, will wonderfully advantage thy Soul, and give thee cause, all the dayes of thy life, yea to eternity, to bless God, for putting it into the heart of the Reverend Author (after he hath sacrificed his spirits and strength,

in

The Contents.

in a publick way of service to God, and his Church, with more than ordinary activity and self-denial) under many bodily weakneses, yea under a sentence of death, thus to employ his Pen, when he cannot his Tongue, for the good of thy Soul. Every particular Chapter, will, if God add his blessing, prove a compleat Soul-saving Treatise. I shall add no more, to perswade thee to Come and see, but this, that nothing but unwillingness to see what is here to be seen, and unperswadableness to make such improvement of such Sights, can make thy Case desperate. Be sure only, Before, In, and After, thy serious perusal of these Chapters, of so much worth, that thou beg earnestly of God, that he would be pleased, with some of his Sons Eye-salve, to open thine eyes, that thou maist see: and by his Spirit move down upon thy spirit, that thine eye may suitably affe^d thine heart, with what so much tends to the promoting of thine eternal welfare.

CHAP.



The Sins of Professors.

CHAP. I.

Their regardlessness of Souls.

I. **HOW** Careless are we of our own Souls? Ignorance of the preciousness.



1. O how few do believe they are men, having bodies that must dye, but Souls that will never dye?

How few do believe that their bodies were given them to be serviceable to their Souls? Their heads, their hearts, their eyes, their ears, their hands, their feet, &c. were all to attend upon their souls, and to help them to Heaven: But this is not believed by many: As they are ignorant of the blessed God, who made them, and of Jesus Christ, who came to redeem them, and know not whether there be an Holy Ghost or no: So they are ignorant of the preciousness of their Souls: Christ hath not given them

Their regardlessness of Souls.

them eyes to read and understand that a man is not, cannot be, profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul. Christs questions, *What will it profit a man, &c.*

Mat. 16. 26. *What shall a man give in exchange for his Soul?* Put it out of all question. Alas, many, who carry the name of Christians, deserve not the name of men. When you begin to value your Souls, you begin to be men. Oh that men would value that, which once they shall, they must value? The damned Spirits know now the worth of their Souls? How many will no?

Inconsiderateness.

2. *How few consider the worth and preciousness of their Souls?* When do such thoughts, as these, possess you? "Here in this earthly *Tabernacle*, in this house of booths, dwell: a thing, that I never saw, that is worth a world: though here I crawl up and down, like a worm of two or three Cubits long, and am in danger to be thrown into an hole every day; yet I carry with me a Jewel, the loss whereof, the whole world cannot repair. How seldom do nominal Professors consider sadly and seriously, what will become of their souls, when *their excellency, which is in them, shall go, or journey, away*, as Eliphaz speaks? Examine your thoughts all the day long, from morning to evening, and few are laid out for the Soul.

Caring more for the body than the soul.

3. *Are not all the thoughts and cares laid out upon the body*, though the body be but clay, and the soul is a spirit, the body must dye; but the soul shall never dye? How frequently do we

we think of our bodies, what their wants, burthens, necessities are? but not so of our souls. How much of every day is spent in providing for thy body, but how little for thy soul? The body should be but the *souls servant*: yet men feed the slave, and starve the child. The body must be fed every day, clad every day, yea, adorned every day, and physick'd if distempered; but the soul needs food, rayment, physick continually, yet lyeth unregarded, is left miserable, naked, starved, &c. A servant hath two talents to keep, the child, and the child's clothes: will the Master thank the servant, if he plead I have kept the clothes, but I have neglected the life of the child? Thy body is but thy souls outward garment. How often have your Ministers told you, that the soul was better than the body? and that your souls needed daily care more than your bodies? and yet you look after the one, with the neglect of the other. A day is coming, when thou wilt wish, thou hadst been bred in the Field among the beasts and worms, for that thou regardest thy soul no more, than if thou hadst but the life of a beast: thou wilt wish thou hadst been made a toad, a serpent, a worm, a dog, a swine, &c. for then thou shouldst not have suffered to eternity, as now thou wilt, unless the eyes of thy understanding be opened to see, consider, and make provision for thy precious, but perishing soul. Thy body is perishing every day, and thy soul is upon the borders of eternity: it must live for ever;

Their regardlesness of Souls.

and yet all thy care is for the body, which likely will not live threescore years and ten; but the soul is neglected, that must live threescore millions of years in Hell without repentance, and then, when that date is over, thou art as far from the end of thy misery, as thou wast the first day, thou wast thrown among the damned.

Strange-
ness
towards
our souls.

4. *How many will not speak with their souls?* They are greater strangers to them, than the Londoners are to their next Neighbours. Didst thou ever ask thy soul such questions? "O my soul, how is it, how will it be, with thee?" "O my soul, in what state art thou?" "O my soul, what will become of thee?" "O! What will become of thee in the next world?"

Niggard-
liness to-
wards our
souls.

5. *At what cost were we any time for our jeopardded souls?* The Phylitian is consulted with, if there be an ache upon the body: we will, with the woman, part with all, beggar our selves, to recover health of body. When did you know a man starve himself, if he could have bread and water, what ever it cost? We will be at any expence of time, labour, and charges, to keep our bodies from starving; but how are the Ordinances of God, the Word and Sacraments (the spiritual food of the soul) neglected? The flesh must be satisfied: as for the soul, there is little regard to its well-being. We cannot endure to see a Cat, a Dog, a Beast want meat; but how easily do many digest the want of that milk, whereby they should be maintained and grow? God (saith one) gives

1 Pet. 2.2.

to these their requests, he gives them Quailers, but sends leanness into their souls.

6. *How fearless are many of soul-losses?* how common is it for people to draw back from the service of Christ? O! what is the matter? I shall lose my estate, liberty, pay such a fine, &c. They little consider what their souls will lose, if they do not persevere, if they live not up their light. Professors (pardon me that I miscall you) though you are blind and mad, and see not the worth of your souls; yet know, that your souls are the most considerable Jewels, you stand possessed of. *All the world will not weigh with one soul.* Thy money may ransom thy body; nothing save Christs blood thy soul. Pause a while (Reader) and reflect on all thy sinful neglects of thy immortal Soul, lest on thy death-bed thou shriek and cry, *O my soul, whither art thou going?*

Fearlessness
of souls
losses.

2. *How little are the souls of others valued and cared for?* how many masters are there, that care no more for their servants souls, than for the dogs? nay, not so much? Perhaps some of you are careful that the bodies of your families be clothed, be fed, &c. but the souls lie unprovided for: more care is taken for the pigs, than for the souls.

Carelessness
of others
souls.

1. *How do we justly censure them as worthy of Capital punishments, that murder the bodies of men; but not so others who pryson and destroy thousands of souls?*

How do you hate to have an hand in murdering the bodies of any, to lay payson for the

Soul-poysoners not censured as they ought to be. Make nothing to lay payson for souls.

destruction of any? and yet how commonly do men lay the poyson of ill counsel, and ill example before others, to cause them to fall into the pit of hell, and are not affected with this great evil?

Not troubled at soul-murthers.

2. *How troubled are we at any that kill bodies, or that murder others, but not so at the millions, that destroy their own and others souls, that have an hand in ruining, in damning themselves and others?*

3. *If any neglect means that might have continued the life of their husbands, children, &c. how are they dejected? how do they wring their hands, and beat their breasts? whereas, if by carelessness, if by the neglect of their duties, if by evil example, they have destroyed their souls, they are not troubled about these matters.*

Low esteems of those that prize their souls.

4. *How do you account meanly of all that take pains for their souls? that wait at the pools of Bethesda, that consult Ministers, and books, and attend on the Ordinances for their souls, whilst you account it your wisdom, to lay out the most, if not all, of your time for your bodies? Hast thou the name of a Christian? I pray God to let one word sink into thine heart; thou hast not Christ, thou hast not the Spirit of Christ in thee; he knows how to value souls, and therefore shed blood for them, and sends his spirit in the Gospel to be importunate for their salvation.*



CHAP. II.

*Their want of saving Conviction and
Compunction.*

HOW many Professors, like *Paul*, are *Alive without the Law?* How many, like *Sardis*, have a name to live; imagine they are alive, *when they are dead?* How many are alive in their own conceit, and perhaps in the conceit of others, and yet are void of the true super-natural life? *How many are contented with their being baptized?* They see no need of Christ, they were born of Christian Parents, they are of the stock of *Abraham*: *We have Abraham to our Father.* They do not consider how many baptized persons are deadly enemies to Christ, and to their souls; and averse to the wayes of holiness: they will not consider that Swearers, Drunkards and Adulterers have as good claims to Christ and Heaven as these have. *How many also please themselves with the Religion of Education?* God hath not moulded their hearts, though Parents their lives: their Parents have taught them some Principles of Religion, but they are strangers to the wonderful operations and teachings, of the

Alive
without
the Law.
Rom. 7. 9.
Rev. 3. 1.

Luke 5. 3.

Holy Ghost : they have not the *Undion* from above (they know not what it is) *that teacheth all things* ; and yet such as these are alive, *i. e.* merry, jocund, jovial, confident if any go to heaven, they shall be of the number. But to speak more particularly.

Few convinced of original sin imputed.

First, How many are there that were never convinced of original sin, imputed, or imparted ? 1. *How few are convinced that Adam was a common person, and that we sinned in his loyns ; that if he had stood, we had stood ; and that it is just with God, that he shipwracking himself, we should be counted sinners in him ? We did eat of the forbidden fruit in Adam, we in Adam believed the Devil rather than God , we in Adam broke with God for toys and trifles ; we were ungrateful, disobedient in him ; we apostatized in him, and broke covenant with God in him ; hence by one mans offence sin entered into the world, and death by sin for that (as Levi paid tythes in Abraham, so) we became rebels against the Majesty of Heaven in our first Parents ; when did you shed a tear for Adams sin, for your and his grand provocation ?*

Rom. 5. 12.

Few convinced of original sin inherent.

Psalm 5. 9.

2. *How few see Adam's sinful nature imparted to them ? They see not their inward part is very wickedness, nothing but wickedness. Few see what a sad Apostacy from the perfection of mans nature Sin hath brought into the world, and how black an Image of Sathan it hath drawn upon the soul ; they never saw what filthy, dirty, loathsome things they are in the eyes of God : they ne-*

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Their want of saving Conviction.

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ver saw their noysomeness and venome, the
garbage and malignity of their hearts. *How*
few see a general defect of all righteousness and
holiness, wherein at first they were created?
How few are convinced of an antipathy to all
that is good? That they are haters of God by
nature; that they are dead in trespasses and
sins (a more dreadful estate than if they were
rotting in their graves) that they have an
Ocean of corruption within them, that will
never be dried up in this life; that they have
a worse Leprosie than that among the *Jewes*,
which got into the walls, and would never
out till the house was demolished; who
almost thinks so sadly of themselves? They
bless God their hearts are good, though
they be the worst of men, pray not, slight
Ordinances, closet duties, and family wor-
ship lies neglected; yet the Devil perswades
them all is well, their hearts are good:
though the heart of man by nature be like hell
it self, whose fire of lust is unquenchable;
though it be like *Peter's* great sheet, which
he saw in the Vision, *full of all unclean things*; Acts 11. 6.
though it be a receptacle of all impiety, yet
how few turn their eyes inward, to see their
natural deformities?

Alas! All the venome the Snake sends
forth, is nothing to the poyson that lies in its
nature: And all those monstrous impieties,
which the lives of men are taunted with, are
not to be compared with the venome that
lurks in the heart of every man by nature.
Men would not glory in their blood and de-
scend,

scent, did they but believe how sin descended, and was conveyed : Men could not content themselves to walk heavily under some actual misdemeanours, were they convinced of the body of sin within them, their greatest sorrows would be for their sinful propensities : Neither would you wonder at any impieties and enormities in the Earth, but would admire at the restraints of Heaven, that they are no greater. Alas ! If the Reader were left to himself, he would presently lay hands on his nearest relations, and on himself : Certainly, the reason why we turn not *Canibals*, why every man is not a *Sodomite*, a *Murderer*, an *Oppressor*, &c. is, because God hath a rein on the heart, and curbs it, for the continuation of mankind, that otherwise would soon be destroyed. *The great boundary of the Seas, and of the Ocean of corruption, is the Sovereign above.* But O ! how do we commend Nature ! such a man hath a good nature : such a man you may trust him, he will never commit such abominations : You may as well believe a *Toad* will not poyson, or the *Sea* will not overflow the *Earth*, if *God* leave it to it self. But to descend to particulars.

Few convinced of the minds corruption.
Rom. 8. 7.

1. *How few see the corruption of their mind ?* How few are convinced, that the carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be ? How are our minds delighted with tales and toys, more than with the serious mysteries of God ? How few are sensible, that they are as foolish and

mad

mad as any Bedlams, in that they please themselves with that, which should be their greatest burden, namely Sin? They are worse than the Bee or Ant, for these prepare for a severe hard Winter, *these* provide for hereafter, whilst most people mind *present* things, *present* pleasure, *present* profit, &c. with the neglect of Heaven, and *future* glory: They mind more what to eat and drink *here*, what to have at present for *this* life, than what to lay up for *eternity*: They busie themselves to know what is of *no* consequence, but careless of *momentous* and *eternal* matters. How few employ their minds to know God, and how he is to be worshipped and pleased; but employ themselves in needless and unprofitable speculations, in this, like *fools* and *children*, who prefer *painted glass* before *jewels of value*, they more set by a little mirth and pleasure, than the matters of their salvation? How are our *minds* enslaved to our *affections*; to the more brutish, inferior and ignoble parts of the soul, and we love to have it so? Through this corruption of our minds how do we justify sin, excuse it, and plead for it? Hence also, there are swarms of idle, confused, impertinent, foolish, ridiculous thoughts, that fill our souls and duties: seldom in the day, week or year, any conceptions of God, suitable to his majesty and holiness. How unstable are our minds and judgements, so that we are as *reeds shaken with every wind*: *now* for duty, *then* soon wheel'd off again; *now* for repenting and humbling work, *then* tired, and soon di-

diverted? And if we know the out-side truths, yet how often is that a barr to our closing with Christ, and walking in him? And yet, though these poor, blind, deluded *Bartimews*'s fill all our wayes and paths, so that where ever we go we meet with them; yet how seldome are any convinced of this, how seldome do any cry for eye *salve*, that they may see?

Few convinced of the corruption of the Conscience.
Tit. 5. 15.

1. And though *not only the mind, but the conscience is defiled*; though there be a blindness upon it, whereby it mis-judgeth, and calleth darkness light; and though it be senseless and stupid, as a stone; yet few do believe *this corruption*: hence they take sanctuary in their consciences, *their consciences bear them witness*; though it be bribed and corrupted; and they have a good conscience, though they know not what conscience is.

Few convinced of the corruption of their Will,

3. *How few are convinced of the corruption of their Will?* How do they wish that drunkenness, uncleanness, &c. were no sins? How do they choose to live a merry, rather than an *holy* life; to be the servants of the Devil, rather than of God; to commit sin, and thereby hazard their damnation, rather than to suffer, and through many tribulations to enter into the Kingdom of God? And how gladly would most Professours enter and take up their rest in somewhat below God, if they could but enjoy the world according to their will?

Few convinced of the corruption of their Affections.

4. *Few are convinced of the pollution of their Affections.* Though they hate what they should

should love, and love what they should hate; though they love sin, which they should hate, and hate and slight God, to whom they should give the preccendency of their love; though all be in disorder, all be mis-placed; though God be *dethroned*, and Sin, Sathan, and the World be *set up above all that is called God*; yet few do really believe that such a miserable Chaos is upon them.

5. *How few are sensible of the corruption of their Memory?* Though they are especially charged to remember God, and how to get a possession of him; and to remember duty, and how to practise; and to remember sin, and how to shun it: yet how soon do they forget such truths, and lodge in their memories injuries, that they may *avenge* them; and vanities, foolish jests, unprofitable toys and tales, to please themselves therewith? You can remember how merry you were such a time, how vain, how your sensualities were *abounding*; but you soon forget a Sermon; or if you remember any thing delivered by the Preacher, it is that, which either concerns others conditions, rather than yours, or which yields you the least advantages heavenward. We can remember the fall of Peter much easier than the repentance of Peter, than his bitter weepings; we can remember David's Adultery, but not his Repentance, and how it broke his bones, and made his bed to swim.

Few convinced of the corruption of their Memories.

Secondly, *How few have been convinced that sin is the greatest evil?* How few have seen

Few convinced that sin is the greatest evil.

Joh. 8.44.

seen it in its perfect odiousness, in its masked face, as that which makes Men Devils fighting against God? *How are most strangers to its pedigree, and consider not the Devil, so its Father?* We would be thought to have nothing to do with the Devil, nor that he hath any thing to do with us; we can live in sin, and yet (hypocritically enough) *dissemble the Devil, and all his works*: We can make more moderate constructions of our sins, and call them the frailties of our flesh; but *that commits sin is of the Devil*, i. e. the Devil's drudge: Sathan works in him, and by him. If men were convinced of this, they would not *drink in the Devils piss*. Sin comes from the Devil, it is the Devils excrement, and yet this is rolled under the tongue as a sweet morsel. O! with what greediness is the Dung of Hell devoured and swallowed. *How few see sin to be contrary to the works of God?* although God had no sooner perfected the goodly fabrick of Heaven and Earth, but sin gave a shrewd shake to all, it shook and dis-joynted all; and had it not been for Christ the great Mediator, it had ruined the whole frame of Nature. *How few see sin to be contrary to the will of God?* God saith, *I will have this done*: I'll not do it, saith Sin: *I'll have this suffered*, saith God; I'll not suffer it, saith Sin: Nay, so great is the contest between Sin and God, that if it could, it would undo God. *How few take notice of its contrariety to the very nature of God?* God is good, Sin is evil; God is pure, Sin is impure. *How*

few believe sin to be universally evil, that there is no good in it? We cannot perswade men, that there is good in poverty, good in disgrace, good in reproaches with the tongue, and persecutions unto death; but easily are men perswaded, there is some good in sin. How few are convinced of the miserable effects and consequences of sin? The wrath of God is not revealed against their unrighteousness and ungodliness, so as to make their knees to tremble. The hand-writing on the wall is not observed. They are still alive. We cannot for our hearts perswade men to go up to heaven, to see what spoyles it made there; could we herein prevail, then would they infer, that there is more evil in the least sin, than there is good in all the Angels of heaven; for that one sin conquered them, and spoyled them of all their beauty, and made them, of glorious creatures, to become such loathsome and hideous spectacles; neither can we prevail with any (almost) to take a journey to Paradise, to see its venome there; or to go to the Garden, or to Mount Calvary, to see what work it did there; or to go to bell-gate, to hear the doleful shrieks and cries which it hath caused there; though God hath said, God shall wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy scalp of such a one as goeth on still in his trespasses, though there is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked; though sin be the sole object of Gods hatred; (for God loved the whole Creation, till its beauty was blasted and stained by sin) though Sin on-

*Psalm 68.
21.*

Isa. 57. 21.

ly

Isa. 59. 2. ly separates between God and souls, though in the belly of it be sound all miseries, deaths and hells; though it be the founder of all graves, and of Tophet; though it fill the conscience with terrours, and hell with fire and brimstone; yet few are affected with the evils of it, but they drink in iniquity as water.

Few sensible of being under the wrath of God.

John 3.

18, 36.

Ecclef. 3.

11.

Thirdly, How few Professours are sensible that they are cast by an holy and righteous Law; that they are condemned creatures? that the wrath of God abideth on them? Few have seen the black cloud full of woes, brim full of wrath, ready to empty it self upon their souls: they take no notice, that though the sentence be not executed speedily; yet it is given forth; and there may be but a little breath, and they are gone to perish for ever. How many senseless souls are there in our Parishes, whose consciences, were never shaken, whose spirits were never wounded, who never received the spirit of bondage and fear, who never knew what a fearfull expectation of judgement meant, who go dancing to hell in the Devils chains? and yet count themselves the noble and gallant spirits, and flatter themselves in their own eyes, and say we shall have peace, though we walk in the imaginations of our hearts? These are (Lazaridian-like) rich, and full, and needing nothing when God is about to spue them out of his mouth, (as we discharge our stomachs of some loathsome sursets.) These are wiser in their own conceit, than seven men that can reason.

Deut. 29.

19.

Rev. 3.

16, 17.

Prov 26.

16.

der a reason. Though one Minister at the heels of another endeavour with Scripture upon Scripture to convince them of, and to prick them at the heart for, their sin and danger; yet they are boysterously confident and presumptuous, that they shall to heaven as soon as any Precisians in the Country. Never did many break one nights sleep, upon the consideration of their sinful and lost condition by nature, never did they loath their ordinary food, or feel the smart of broken bones, as David did; though they have sinned at an higher rate; never did they know what a wounded spirit meant, what anguish of soul was: never did they feel Gods wrath, or sin, a burthen insupportable; they were never pricked at the heart, so as to cry out, *What shall I do to be saved? What shall I do to have my sins pardoned? Would you know the reason of all this security? Alas! they are dead in sins and trespasses.* A dead condition is an insensible condition; death deprives of sense as well as life; the dead are not frightened with the swords and pistols at their breasts; the dead fear not, though threatened with fire and brimstone; the dead hear not, though God be on Mount Ebal thundering curses upon curses; the dead see not, though sin be so ugly a monster, and hell so frightful a place, the dead smell not, though sin stinks worse, than the vomit of dogs, than rotten Sepulchres, or than the corrupted matter of the most nasty disease: it offends not the dead to have this stinking Carrion alwayes in
B
their

their bosomes; the dead feel not, though that which is heavier than mountains of lead be lying on their backs; they groan not, neither do they complain so much, as *Cain* did, they do not go softly in the bitterness of their souls, by reason of their sins. Many cannot say with *Hannab*, that ever they were of a sorrowful Spirit. Though there be so many curses upon the heads of all natural persons, though there be an entayl of wrath upon the heads of the very sins, they live in, though their sins are, or may be, circumstantiated to a greater degree, than any of the Scripture-Offenders that we read of, as being committed under the open Sun of the Gospel, though Hell be open to receive them ever moment, whilst impenitent, whilst hardened, though the Valley of *Hinnom* is making room for them, to entertain them with the vengeance of a justly provoked God; yet few fear, few work out their salvation with weeping eyes, and trembling hearts: they are alive without the Law; they never walk softly with *Abah*, or were under *Soul-trouble* with *Judas*; they fall short of the pangs and sense of Hypocrites; Oh! Oh! Oh! I pity these secure souls; how short will they be of their hopes, and how far short of Heaven?

Few sensible of,
Sathans
working
in them.
Ephes. 2. 2.

Fourthly, How few are sensible, that all the while the Devil works in them, as in his workshop? That he possesseth the heart of every unregenerate man? The strong man keeps his house; and so all is quiet. It was a sad day

when *the abomination of desolation* should be seen standing *in the holy place*; but what are abominable *Men* to abominable *Devils*? They did but exercise their cruelties on the bodies of the *Jews*, but how many *Devils* have their walks in the hearts of natural men and women? If thou art *in thy bloods*, the Devil hath entred into thee, as sure as ever he entred into *the herd of Swine*, and so hurrieth thee into base lusts, as he carried them headlong into the Sea.



CHAP. III.

Their want of Despair in Self.

IF Men are sensible of their sin and misery, Few humbled souls. Rom. 10. 3. yet *how many* are going about to establish their own righteousness? Though some are convinced of the ugliness of sin, of the misery by sin: yet they are not fully convinced, that the covenant of works requires personal, and constant obedience, that it admits not of repentance, that it accepts not of the will for the deed; but *Curseth every one* Gal. 3. 10. that continueth not in all things, which are written in the Book of the Law to do them, so that if there be a sinner by a vain thought, the conditions

ditions of that covenant are broken : and no thing, save *fearful expectations*, should seize on such a Soul. Few (I say) believe this but though they are bankrupt Children of Adam, yet they hope by their peddling Want to set up again, and maintain themselves without being beholden to any other, for the procuring of their salvation : hence they pray, who were prayerless before ; hear and (perhaps) with much diligence, who were wont to play away the Sabbath and Sabbath time ; and reform in many things ; at now, *Soul, take thine ease, thou hast gone laid up for many years, yea, for eternity ; thou art converted sure, and so think all the Neighbourhood* : O ! what a change is here ? This man was a Drunkard, not so now ; an Adulterer, a prophane Belial ; but now civilized, yea, a devout man : *Serious*, that was formerly before ; and *touching the righteousness which is in the Law, blameless*. Now he is alive ; his Conscience is pacified, which before troubled him ; he can hear the Word gladly, which before was burthensome to him ; he can pray with affection, and with some lights, when before all the Ordinances of Heaven were tedious and intollerable burthens to him. Now he thinks, Sure I have life within me, I am not dead. He sees all this while, that he must have life from without, and ability from without : He doth not yet say, *Mine iniquities are gone from mine head ; as an heavy burden, they are heavy for me. Mine iniquities have taken*

Phil. 3. 6.

Psal. 38. 4.

Psal. 40. 12.

upon me, so that I am not able to look up. No, no he can look up with confidence, and call God Father; and though sometimes he provokes God, yet he is secure. He doth not see that he is dead, i. e. damned, and insufficient as of himself to think any thing as of himself, but all his sufficiency is of God. He thinks he is not utterly unable to make amends for his sins, not quite dead, for he can pray, &c. He sees not, that it is as easie to make new Worlds, as to put up one acceptable Prayer to God. He sees not, that he needs an Almighty power to enable him to perform his duties, and infinite satisfaction to discharge him of his debts. He is somewhat sensible of his danger by sin, but he eyes not him that is mighty to save. He looks for help within, but not without. He sees no absolute necessity of Christ all this while. He sees not, that all his righteousnesses are as filthy raggs in Gods sight, and that all his duties fill up the Catalogue of his sins. He sees not, that there is no Salvation in any other, save Jesus Christ, because there is no other Name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved. He hopes to go to Heaven through doors of his own, the door of Repentance, the door of Reformation, the door of good Works, &c. Hence he takes hold of the mercy of God, and the promises of pardon, Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, yea, he will mercifully pardon. " Thus have I done,

Job 12. 6.

2 Cor. 3. 5

Isa. 63. 12

Isa. 64. 6.

Acts 4. 12.

Isa. 55. 7.]

Matth. 12.
43, 44, 45.

Luke 19.
10.

Luke 18.
21.

" (saith this awakened person) and now
 " Case is good. O! I would not be in mine
 " old myres for a World: O! what a change
 " is here? I was a careless Wretch, careless
 " of God, and my Soul, careless of praying
 " reading, hearing, &c. not so now. And
 now that *the house, out of which the unclean*
Spirit is gone, is swept and garnished, he ca-
 rieth it high, and little thinks he, that *few*
worse Spirits are entring in. This is the case
 of multitudes of Professors, whom Christ
 will never seek nor save, for that they are
 lost, they are not succourless and helpless
 they think they may save themselves from
 wrath to come. They see not, that there
 a Satisfaction to be made to Divine Justice
 which they cannot make; wherefore their
 hopes are from their reformations, not from
 Christ; their peace is from their performances
 ces, not from Christ's blood of attonement
All these have I kept from my youth up. He
 he is confident, not from Christ's coming unto
 the Law: hence he is diligent in Prayer, &c.
 but careless of the way of Faith; hence till
 blesteth himself in his own performances, and so
 is no way taken up with what Christ hath done
 and suffered for him. *Moses is magnified*
and Christ is slighted: Duties are set up, Ministry
 Faith neglected: Works advanced and their
 up, and Faith is little heeded or looked at
 How few are there, who count themselves
 wholly destitute of every good thing, who
 should make them acceptable unto God
 They lay not the weight of Salvation upon of

grace of God by Jesus Christ, but upon something that comes from themselves : they will have a Bridge of Duties, that shall carry them over the Gulph of eternal misery : they hope to *quench Hell Fire* by their *tears*. Alas ! some years ago, you might as well have drawn Water out of the Flint, as tears from them ; but the case is altered : “ I was blind, “ but now I see the deserts of sin, which I “ saw not before ; I see it is a fearful thing to “ sin against God, and now I bewail my sins, “ and am sorry at heart for them ; sure my “ condition is mended, I thank God I am not “ as other men, nor as once I was my self, “ I hope by my tears to wash away my sins. All the while Christ lieth without doors, the Soul is a stranger to Faith in Christ, he sees not his insufficiencies, he sees not his unworthiness to go to Heaven and Glory, he sees not his inability to think a good thought, he hopes without a Christ he can do something. If he did judge his condition hopeless, he would tremble, and have no rest in himself, till God hath delivered him ; he would see an absolute necessity of obtaining Christ and his righteousness, and he would be put off with nothing else. But O ! how hard a work do Ministers find it, first to take off men from their sins, and then from confidence in their duties ? We tell men, Christ will have no selfisharer in the glory of saving lost man ; but people will at least have their works and Christ. Go to divide the spoiles, to share in the glory of bringing back lost Souls to God. We ad-

vise men to lay no weight on their duties, but to lean alone on Christs merits; but in vain. Christ saith, *If ye seek me, let these go their way*, these duties as well, as these sins; but the deaf ear is turned, and we find it much easie to perswade men, their sins will damn them, than their duties, whilst Christ is thereby neglected.



CHAP. IV.

Their miscarriages about their Soul-troubles.

Miscarriages about Soul troubles.

IF the Spirit of the Lord have convinced men of their danger by their sins, and their own righteousness; that they still see God angry with them, and if their souls remain under trouble and disquiet; yet are they not guilty of some, if not all, of the following miscarriages?

Few justify God.

1. *How few are there that justify God*; Few accept of the punishment of their iniquities, they do not clear God, as they should, from all unrighteousness. Commonly proud hearts swell and fume against these methods of God. Though the filthiness of their hearts be laid open before them, yet they fall not down upon

upon their faces in the acknowledgement of their unworthiness of mercy : few charge themselves, and acquit God. They cannot be brought to give God the glory of his righteousness, if he should condemn them to the pit of hell : they do not willingly and uprightly own the desert of damnation, and charge themselves with it, as their due portion, and most just inheritance. Few give *Lam. 3.30.*
their cheeks to him that smiteth, as the Church did : they do not say, *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him*, or with Ezra, *thou hast punished us less than our iniquities have deserved*, or with Daniel, *O Lord ! Righteousness belongeth unto thee ; but unto us confusion of face*. How seldome do you hear Professours with this Confession in their mouths, " Lord, I am thy creature, and thou mayst do with thy creature what pleaseth thee ; It pleased thee to put thine image on me, to create me up- *Ecccl. 7.29.*
right, but I have sought out many inventions, I have sold my self for naught, I have preferred the Devils work before thine, and therefore thou maist abhor me, and give me my portion among the damned crew, and if I feel some sparks of hell fire (in thy wrathfull present frowns) it is of thy rich patience and mercy, that they are but sparks ; if thou cast me off for ever, it is but what I have deserved long ago ; it is of the Lords mercy, that I was not hurried from the womb or cradle to hell, because of my native sinfulness, but wo is me,

" I

Psal. 51. 4.

"I have provoked the pure eyes of thy glorious Majesty dayes without number. I have been a Rebel of a long standing against thee, my will hath been justling and quarrelling with thine these many years, and therefore if I be sent to hell, thou art righteous and clear when thou judgest. I can blame none save my self, if I perish everlastingly, though I have many fears and sorrows on me; yet blessed be God, they are not the sorrows of hell, thanks be to the Lord, that I am not yet among the damned ones, roaring in the Pit of hell. Few believe they deserve damnation; hence Souls are murmuring at any affliction, at the loss of an Husband, Child, Estate, &c. as if God had dealt hardly with them, in depriving them thus.

Few willingly under Soul-trouble.
Hos. 2. 6.
Rom. 8. 15.

How few Professours, when under Soul-troubles, are willingly under them? They see not the advantage of having their way bedged up with these thorns. They do not receive the Spirit of Bondage. They do not accept this punishment; They take it not kindly at God's hands. Their troubles are involuntary, few kindly works that I meet with among awakened and startled Professours; they are held in the chains against their will. How many are afraid of sorrow for sin? Some think it will spoil good faces, and their beauty may be lost through their troubles; but others think it will bring them to despair, and therefore farewell to such a Preacher; he is too terrible for their Souls. Hence Saul must have

have his *barp* to divert him, the Cards must be taken up again, some merry Books, some Romances must be read, perhaps a Play may be seen, jovial frothy Company must be called in, and all this, to divert the Soul from minding its danger, lest it be swallowed up of grief, or some unskilful and unfaithful Emperick shall be sent for, to sow *pillows* under him, that he may sleep the quieter. Few (*Daniel-like*) when their *cogitations much* Dan. 7. 28. trouble them, so that their *countenances are changed in them*, keep notwithstanding the matter in their hearts. How few are active in their Soul-troubles? Retire, and go alone that they may search the Scriptures, and ransack their hearts in order to contrition and humiliation of their hearts? How few are gladdened by any portion of Gods word, that brings their sinfulness and self-fulness to remembrance, and causeth any meltings of heart, and humblings of Souls under it? How do some Professours quarrel with their Ministers, and snarl at the Books, that give them trouble of Spirit?

3. *How few mourn for Sin upon Spiritual accounts?* That their God is dishonoured (their good and gracious God, who hath done so much for them, &c.) doth not chiefly cut their hearts; *Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight*; but perhaps they are troubled for wronging themselves, endangering themselves, &c. They cry as *dogs*: when they have done a fault, they fear the whip, and so they houle.

Few mourn on spiritual accounts.

Psal. 51. 4.

4. *How*

Few re-
forming
and be-
lieving
mourners:

4. *How many Professours mourn for their sins, yet live in the continued practice of them? Notwithstanding their tears; yet their hearts are in league with their lusts: Thus, like the Scolds at Billingsgate, they are soon out, soon in again with their lusts; but few whilest mourning for their sins are solicitous and carefull which way God may have satisfaction for the injuries, that have been done unto him: The mourning of many Professours lasts no longer than the trouble of Conscience: as soon as the guilt of sin is removed (as they hope,) their mourning ceaseth, though the strength of sin be as great as ever.*

Few seek
comfort,
aright.

5. *Among the multitudes professing Religion, how many seek for grace, in order to their comfort? (Joy, Peace, Comfort, being their great end) but how few seek for comfort in order to grace?*

Few mourn
for unbe-
lie.

6 *How few mourn for the slighings of Christ? (It is more natural and so more easie to mourn for sins against the Law, than those against Christ and his Gospel,) Therefore if there be many tears shed for neglect of Prayer, for Theft, Perjury, &c. yet how few are found mourning for undervaluing and rejecting Christ and his Tenders? whose Soul cries out, "O! how unkind have I been to Christ? O! that he should come out of his Fathers Bosome for me, come under the Law, yea Dye for me; and yet I should keep him out of doors: that the Son of God, that the brightnes of the Fathers glory, and the express Image of his person,* "the

"the upholder of all things by the word of his Heb. 1. 3.
 "power, when he had by himself purged our
 "sins, and sat down on the right hand of the
 "Majesty on high, should stoop so low, as Rev. 3. 20.
 "to stand at the door, and knock, and yet that
 "I should not let him in; break heart, break
 "into small dust, be trembling all over for
 "thy unkindnesses to so great, so rich, so
 "good a Friend. O wretch that I have been!
 "What! more kindness to my Dog, my
 "Cat, &c? If my Dog be whining at the
 "door, he hath admittance, and yet thou
 "shut out; O, I abhor my self in dust before
 "thee. I meet with few of these mourners.



CHAP. V.

*Their ignorance of Christ : their serving
 their turns of Christ : their making
 base capitulations with Christ.*

1. **H**OW many are ignorant of Christ, and
 of what use he is to perishing Souls? Tootoo
 They know no more the Gift of God, than many ig-
 the Samaritan Woman did : they know not norant of
 what an excellent gift Christ is, tho' he is the Christ.
 Fountain of living Water, and therefore ask
 nothing of him. It is one thing to hear of a
 Christ, and another thing to know Christ. How
 few

John 4. 10.

- few know Christ to be their only Life? you did believe, that he that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life: And that who so findeth me (Christ) findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord: But he that sinneth against me (Christ) wrongeth his own Soul; all they that hate me (Christ) love death: Upon such Conviction, what would you not give for Life? Esau will part with his Birth-right, to preserve his Life. The Woman will part with all her Estate, to recover health, and to secure her self from the grave. Of all blessings we value Life mostly, but few have such esteems of Christ. Few can say, *Paul, What things were gain to me, those counted loss for Christ: yea doubtless, and count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith. I determined not to know any thing, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.* Or with David, *What have I in Heaven but thee? and there is none upon Earth that I desire besides thee.* Few look on Christ as the Original of their Life, that they must live, move, and have their being in Christ, and from Christ alone; that they are dead without him; and hence their desires are not after him. If you knew, that you

want

want Christ more than Bread and Water, then would you cry out, Lord, give me Christ, None but Christ, None but Christ, in him is my help, in him is my salvation. He is the Author of all our good affections, and of all our gracious abilities; but alas! blind man sees him not in his usefulness. *What is thy Beloved more than another Beloved? He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty, that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men. Men must dye, and be damned, without a Christ; but they know it not, they know no good that Christ is, and no good that Christ brings.* Cant. 5. 9. Isa. 53. 2, 3.

Secondly, *How many serve their turns of Christ, close with Christ for their own ends?* Many serve their turns of Christ. When men have served their turns, one of another, away they goe: so these troubles they have, and ease they would have; they have stayed off from Christ as long as they could; they have tryed worldly Comforts, they will not do; they have tryed Duties, they will give no rest; and therefore, in the terrours of their Spirits, *they must have Christ, so much of him, as may give them quiet and rest.* Men are weary of the bands and setters, wherein they are held under the Law; they would fain be delivered from Sathan that torments them, and from the sins that now stare them in the face; they groan under the weight of the wrath of God, but not under the body of sin; Sathan as a Tormentour is un-welcome, but as a Tempter is still liked well enough.

"O!

"O ! I am afraid I shall to Hell. O !
 "there be no other way to escape, b
 "through Christ, O ! then for a Chr
 "then Sermons and Ministers are welcom
 "in hopes of bringing in (not so much
 "Christ, as) peace, and comfort to t
 "troubled Spirit. So that men use Christ
 sick men take meat, not for love of it,
 liking to it (for their Stomachs rise again
 it) but for fear of death, which makes the
 force themselves to eat. Though many com
 to Christ, it is by constraint, not willingly
 not with delight, not as an healthy m
 comes to a full table, to feed with pleasu
Many to avoid a greater mischief, to an
damnation, to avoid eternal torments wil
Christ in their sore extremities : they will d
 make large confessions, take up great reli
 tions against their sins, pray to God, i
 with vehemency and constancy, so as d
 never prayed before ; but upon ease to
 impostumed matter, upon recoveries out
 their troubles, they become if not profit
 yet worldly and negligent of Christ,
 Person, his Laws, his Concernments. T
 have of Christ what they came for : T
 come to Christ, as some come to Sho
 not to have all in the Shop, but w
 they immediately want : They want co
 fort, and therefore they venture as
 Lepers to the Camp of the Syrians, d
 had no love to them, they counted them
 Enemies ; but *if we stay here, we perish*;
 as Ladies use Litters, to carry them over

dirt: or as we use a Pent-house, during the Storm, and then Farewell; or as *Passengers* the Boat, they cry vehemently *a Boat, a Boat*, and as soon as they are Ferried over the deep, farewell to the Boat, they think no more of it. *When he slew them, then they sought him: and they returned and enquired early after God.* *Then, never before, and never after.* Undoubtedly, multitudes have been affrighted to Christ, who were never truly and thoroughly converted to him, and have left their Sins from compulsion of their judgement, not from the propension of their will: not from any love they have born to Christ: they love to be safe, but still hate to be holy. O! O! how many are herein deluded, who have pretended a great deal of love to Christ, whilst base Self, the love of pleasure and ease, and to be exempted from horrors and fears, hath been the Bias that hath drawn them to Christ? I appeal to thy Conscience, whether Christ be valued, be look'd after, save in a strait? When trouble is upon thee, then this Physician is sent for; but when the pang is over, the Physicians company is too chargeable, is no way desirable; the sooner he turns his back, the better. When Women are great with Child, and when Men and Women both, hear it thunder, and see it lighten, when the Arrows of the Lord fly thick, and a great mortality is sweeping many to the Grave, O! then how shall I get Christ? then Books are read, Sermons heard and valued, Prayers not neglected; but when the fears of

C

death

Psal. 78.34.

Psal. 4. 6.
Eph. 5. 16.

death are over, O ! then *who will shew us any good ?* Then Redeem lost time, not for God and Souls, but for the World ; then head and ears in the world again, then secret Prayer is neglected ; then the Bible lies in a dusty corner, not viewed, till the next storm arise and then Christ must be awakened with, *Master, carest thou not that we perish ?* I will tell you what your Ministers have told you before, *Sin and the World were your Companion in days of health, ease and peace ; and Christ your desire in cloudy dayes.* Is it not so ? Christ in the day as well as in the night, like a chief between thy breasts, thou hast caused to say, *Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me bless his Holy Name.* But I for most pitch on Christ for themselves, and not for Christ. Christ in the time of Contagion shall go for something ; but Christ in dayes of health and ease shall be valued no more than a meer Chimera, a Cipher, a Nothing. It is a vain thing to take Christ to pacifie the Conscience, and another to take him to purifie the heart. An unquiet Conscience is to most a greater burden, than an insensible, seared, and perverted Conscience, than an impure heart. Observe Repent of thy juglings with Christ. They flatter him with their mouths, and they libel unto him with their tongues. They pretend to come to Christ, in order to service and obedience, when all the while they serve themselves on Christ.

Psal. 78. 36.

Base Capitulations with Christ.

Thirdly, *How many have base Capitulations with Christ ?* Many come running to Christ

and ask him, (as the man in the Gospel)
Good Master, what shall I do, that I may inherit eternal life ? Christ tells him and them, *Mark 10. 17, 21, 22.*
Go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come, take up the Cross, and follow me ; But as he, so they are discontented, *And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved, for he had great Possessions.* Undoubtedly many Hypocrites have some glimpse of Christs glory, and they run to Christ, whilst others deride him ; but they like not the Price that Christ sets ; *They would have Christ on their own terms.* Christs terms are to have the Heart ; *My Son, give me thy heart : Do not lend it only, but give ; give it cheerfully, give it presently, give me it now :* *Prov. 23. 26.*
 Now, that it is called to day, *To day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.* Give me thy heart, to be framed and fashioned by me, to be stamped and sealed by me ; be no longer thine own : *Heb. 3. 7, 8.*
 I will not be content thou lend me thy heart for a Sabbath, or for a day of prayer, and then that thou call for thine heart again, and bestow it upon thy lusts ; give me thine heart, and do not sell it for base ends, for base respects : give me thine heart, do not keep it to thy self ; lay up and leave thine heart in my hand, for me to keep it for thee. But alas ! how shamefully do we break with Christ ? *We would live as we list, and do as we list.* We are content to give Christ the body, the outward man, the ear, the tongue, the head,

Mat. 22. 37.

2 Pet. 2.
20, 22.

head, &c. but we reserve our hearts for the service of the World and of Sin : or if we are perswaded to give the heart ; yet it is but a divided heart, not the whole heart, but a piece of it. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart*, saith Christ ; but Pride, Covetousness, and Voluptuousness would fain have a share ; hence no full closings betwixt Christ and many Professors ; Christ as they part. They, as some Customers, seem to commend the wares, but they like the money better. Few see themselves so miserable without a Christ, as to come to the price. Their cursed Leagues with base Lusts bind them so fast in Chains, that they cannot, they will not come up to Christs proposals, to Christs demands ; they will treat with Christ on no other terms, unless they may have the pleasures of Sin, and not fulfill the lusts of the flesh ; but if Conscience be disquieted, and troublesome, then they make new offers ; *they will leave many, they will except but one* ; There is but one exception they have, and if that may be accepted, then they are Christs ; they have but a reserve. These Swine are contented to enjoy the pollutions of the World, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they may have one mire to return to, and wallow in. If Christ will stoop to these terms, then welcome Christ ; if one sin and Christs Sacrifice share the heart betwixt them, the man is contented ; but few are contented, that who have should know, that every sin be parted from

The Lord be merciful to me; If I bow in the house of Rimmon. No, saith Christ, All, or none. If the Conscience be not quiet upon this; then, as Marriners throw overboard their goods, their Jewels, their Bales of Silk, and other pleasant wares in a Tempest, to ease the Vessel, which they wish for in a Calme, and labour to fetch up again, if it be possible, when the Storm is over: So many Professors will part from all the practice of sin, throw all over board, as the Marriners did *Jonah*, though much against their wills, in hopes of riding out the storm, and then wish for their lusts again, yea, with the Dog, ^{2 Pet. 2.22.} return unto the Vomit, and with the Sow to wallow in the Mire. Doubtless many, (like him, who had a mind to his Kinsman's land, and would have paid the purchase-money, but liked not the terms of marrying *Ruth*.) They would have Christ by the purchase of their duties: they hope by the Stock of Prayers, Tears, and Obedience to purchase Christ; but will not match with Christ, and have the Inheritance by that way of conveyance. That man liked *Ruth's* means, but not *Ruth's* person, and many like somewhat of Christ, but not his Person, not all of Christ; they like Christ's pleasant Summers, but not his pinching Winters; love and like his Heaven, but not his severe Commandments; they like his Sacrifice, but not his Service. Many Peddling Customers Christ hath, but few, very few, who will come roundly up to Christ's offers, and take all off his hands. They would take

*Let us try
truly love his
Law*

off his Mercy, his Peace, his Righteousness; but not his Spirit, his Grace, his Holiness, &c. What saith Christ? "If you will have my Comforts, you must have me too; if you will have my Pardons, my Person too; you must take Me, as well as Mine; you must have Me, as well as my Heaven. This makes many away sorrowful. Again, "If you will have my (saith Christ) you must be at some cost, at some pains and trouble to enjoy me; nothing of Me, or Mine is got without difficulty and industry; your cold Prayers must not suffice, your lazy hearings are not enough; you must watch your hearts all day long, you must make a Covenant with your eyes, and keep your lips, as with a bridle. Are ye so contented? Oh! (saith the slothful Professor) I would not to Heaven on a Feather-bed, I would not be contented to Pray now and then, Morning and Evening, so I may be at my own posture all the following hours. Hearken (saith Christ) Daughter) and consider and incline thine ear, and forget also thine own people, and thy Father's house. So shall the King greatly desire thy beauty; for he is thy Lord, and worship him. Three Alls I expect you part with: (saith Christ.) 1. All your sinful lusts, the wayes of the old Adam; Our Father's house. Ever since Adams apostasie, God and man have parted houses. Ever since our Fathers house is an house of ill manners, an house of sin and wickedness.

Psalms 45.
10, 11.

Isa. 55. 7.

"the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous

" our man his thoughts : and let him return unto
 " the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him ; and
 " to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.
 " 2. *All your worldly advantages.* By faith Moses Heb. 11.
 " when he was come to years, refused to be called 24, 25, 26.
 " the Son of Pharaoh's daughter ; choosing rather
 " to suffer affliction with the people of God, than
 " to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season ; esteem-
 " ing the reproach of Christ greater riches than
 " the treasures in Egypt ; for he had respect
 " unto the recompence of the reward. If any man
 " come to me, and hate not his Father and Mo- Luk. 14. 26.
 " ther, and Wife, and Children, and Brethren,
 " and Sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot
 " be my Disciple. He that hath all these must
 " be ready to part with all ; they are joyn'd
 " not disjunctively, but copulatively. 3. *All*
 " *self, self-will, self-righteousness, self-suffici-*
 " *encies, self-confidences, and self-seifings.*
 " But, Oh ! how do many pretenders to
 " Christ hate these Proposals ? I can tell you
 " what many of your terms are ; I will have
 " a Christ, if I may live as I list, and love as I
 " list, and walk as I list ; I'll indent with
 " Christ to make much of him when my Con-
 " science gnaws and troubles me, so I may
 " but dismiss him, when I have sung Lullaby
 " to Conscience.



CHAP. VI.

Their delays to close with Christ,

Many de-
layers to
believe.

- 4ly. **H**OW many do delay in their coming to Christ? And O! what indignities are herein put upon Christ? How long do they stand at the doors of sinners, ere they let him in. My head (saith Christ,) is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night. Cant. 5. 2. Though he limit sinners to a day, To day thou shalt die. Heb. 3. 7. ye will hear his voice, &c. Though our life be as even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away, ready every moment to expire; though we must needs perish and be damned, if we believe not in him before we dye; He that believeth not, shall be damned. Mar. 16. 16. ed; though now is the accepted time, though the Spirit may never invite more: My spirit shall not always strive with man; though we are not sure of one day of grace more; yet how do many hazard their eternity rather than that they will be yet beholding to Christ for Life and Salvation? Though they may have Christ's Righteousness, his Redemption, his Spirit, his Image, his Heaven, his Glory, his Love, his Honors, his Inheritance by coming to him; yet what trifling delays are mens hearts

filled with? Though they are actually condemned by the Law for their Capital Offences, for high Treason against the Majesty of Heaven, and pardons be offered freely by Jesus Christ unto them, if they will but accept of *him* and *them*, yet so is Christ fall'n in the accompt of them, who yet are nominal Christians, that they will hazard their Souls, rather than they will yet be so much behold-ing to Christ. This desperate enmity against Christ and his offers is the condemning sin. *This is the condemnation, that light is come into* Joh. 3. 19. *the world, and men loved Darknesse rather than Light, because their deeds were evil.* All other sins are nothing to this; what? when God hath limited thee to *A day*, wilt thou, darest thou carelessly mispend that *one day*, when thou art not sure of another? Believe it, your trifling delays are more hideous sins, do more stain your souls, and provoke God, than drunkenness and unnatural lusts in such, as never had one of your Calls. How darest thou, having so many wayes transgressed against this God, having provoked him to wrath by so frequent breaches of his Holy Law, to add to all these iniquities thy trifling delays of not coming into Christ, that thou maist be pardoned? How durst thou, when lying under the wrath of a justly incensed God, send away Christ as Felix did Paul, with *Go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee*: when (wretch) is that convenient season? Is it then, when thou hast served the Devil some weeks, moneths, or years

2 Thes. 1. 7,
8.

years longer? *When thou hast spent all the
flowre of thy time and strength in the service
of Hell? Must Then Christ have the dregs
thy time? Must he have nothing but Satans
leavings? O! Doubtless for these delays
Christs wrath ready to be powred out upon
this Nation to the uttermost. The Lord
Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven, in flames of
fire, taking vengeance on them that obey not
Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: By delays
to hearken to Christs calls and invitations
thou tellest Christ to his face, that he is
altogether lovely, that he is not the fairest
ten thousand, that there is somewhat in
service and the Devils, that is more desirable,
than what can be had in Christs. And
thou imagine such Blasphemy, viz. (To tell
Christ to his face, that thou valuest thy
above the enjoyment of him,) is not
voking? O! if ever these come over
to Christ, if Christs patience be extended
yet longer, and they be at length won
him; How will they befool themselves
they came into Christs service no sooner
Nimis sero te amavi. "O! I have loved
"too late. Oh the Joy, the unspeakable
"I have lost! Oh the peace, that I might
"had! Oh the assurance of Gods love, that
"my Soul might have been filled with!
"the experiences of the grace of God, that
"might have had, if I had come into
"on Christs first call and intreaty! Oh the
"opportunities of service, that I might
"had, when the marrow was in my bone*

"wh

"when I was young and fresh for duty ! Oh !
 "How good had it been if I had *born* Christs Lam. 3. 27.
 "yoke (sooner) in my youth ? O the many
 "sins that I have been guilty of ! Oh ! how
 "long withstood I the Grace of God , and
 "grieved the Spirit of God ? Oh ! What a
 "burden was I to Christs Ministers, and
 "much more to Christ himself ? But God
 alone knows, how soon his Spirit shall cease
 striving with these poor Souls, and how long
 they shall be within a capacity of obeying
 the Heavenly Call. The *Jewes* have a
 Rule, that if a man vowes any service to
 God before he dyes, he must do it present-
 ly, because he may dye presently. Death Rev. 6. 8.
 and Hell are described coming on Horse-
 back, in full speed : Ask thy self therefore
Jeremiah's question, Can I out-run or escape Jer. 12. 5.
 these Horsemen ? However, through the great
 and wonderful averfeness there is in mens
 hearts from Christ, they stay and linger, like
 Lot in Sodom, that if God do not work a
 miracle upon them, and for them, they will
 perish in the flames. They know what the
 foolish Virgins lost by their delays ; all is one,
 no coming to Christ, as long as possibly they
 can make any shift to live without him, and
 untill an Almighty power exert it self on their
 Souls, to make them willing of a Christ. One
 hath a Wife, another a Yoke of Oxen, all of
 them some business or other to detain them for
 the present from Christ. They do not utterly
 deny to come, but at present they have such
 employments, as that they have no present
 free-

freedom to wait upon him. The Son of God must dance attendance on them, they must be banqueting with the Devil within, and Christ must stand without, yea, wait their leisure, till they receive him in. There are several sorts of these delaying Professors.

Delays to
come to
Christ.

From love
to worldly
Lusts.

1. Some (and they the worst sort) for their great love to their lusts, and to the pleasures and sensualities of this life, which they fear, when they are under Christs yoke, shall be bereaved of, delay coming to Christ. Sin hath so rooted it self in their hearts and affections, that they are loth to take a farewell thereof, loth to mortifie their carnal members; Sin is so prevalent with the God that they had rather part from their right hand, and foot, than part from their sin; hence they choak their Conversions what they can, admit of any pleasures and diversions to wear out the impressions that are made to their Consciences, that they may still lodge in their bosoms, and not come to Christ; hence they labour to quench the Spirit of God, and through the prevails of spiritual sloth, do not use the means, whereby they may be converted to Christ. They pretend they are desirous of Christ, only they doubt whether Christ is willing to receive them; but which lieth at the bottom is this, they are loth to leave their darling lusts, and loth to pray, watch their hearts, and to do what God requires and expects at their hands, in order to Conversion. You may imagine God is highly provoked hereby; for God to send his

Gunt to you, the best Jewel that ever lay in his
 bosome, and for you to neglect and undervalue
 him, and prefer swinish lusts before him, 'tis
 a plain argument, that you never saw sin aright
 in its nature and effects, and that you do not
 credit God in his discoveries of the glory of his
 Son. You do not believe you are so miserable
 without a Christ, as indeed you are; you slight
 the greatest Gift, that ever God conferred up-
 on the children of men; you make void the
 great counsels of God, all the thoughts of his
 wisdom and grace, in contriving such a way,
 as by Jesus Christ, to save you from wrath to
 come; you also frustrate the expectations of
 the God, for Surely (saith God) they will re-
 verence my Son; whereas, by your trifling
 and delays, you tell God and men, that you be-
 lieve not any advantage you shall have by the
 Son of God; you think it will be to your loss,
 not to receive in the Lord of glory. He tells you,
 Ye shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness
 of his House, and ye shall drink of the Rivers
 of his Pleasures. He tells you, He hath ga-
 thered his Myrrh, with his Spices; He hath
 set wine, milk, and honey. You cry out, I
 have put off my Coat, how shall I put it on, &c.
 A little more slumber in the Devils Lap, a lit-
 tle more folding of the hands to sleep. You are
 told of Joys unspeakable, and full of glory; of
 Peace that passeth all understanding; of eternal
 Life by knowing Christ. You are told, you
 can never be reconciled unto God, but by
 Christ; that he must end all Controversies
 between Christ, and your Souls; that He is
 able

Mat. 21. 37.

Psal. 36. 8.

Cant. 5. 1;
3.

Prov. 24. 33

1 Pet. 1. 8.
Phil. 4. 7.
John 17. 3.

- able to save to the uttermost, all that come to the
- Heb. 7. 25. God by him; that His Word is more desirable than gold; yea, than much fine gold. But this
- Psal. 19. 10. this prevails not with you. When I have the
- Acts 24. 25. convenient Season, &c. Yet I cannot, I have
- Luk. 14. 18. have me excused. He tells you, If you believe not that I am he, you shall dye in your sin; and that he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him, yet he
- Joh. 8. 24. delays still. He tells you, Blessed is that man that heareth me, and whose findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Father again.
- Joh. 3. 36. Prov. 8. 24, 35. Rev. 3. 20. Behold, I stand at the door and knock, if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he will abide with me.
- Joh. 6. 35. I am the Bread of Life, he that cometh to Me, shall never hunger, and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst. He tells you, Of Strangers, and enemies, you shall become Children, and this seems a light matter, to be so near related to the King of Kings. Is not this Englands great Provocation, to refuse to give an honour and dignity? He assures you, There is no Condemnation to them that are in Christ. And shall he not condemn Wretches, that slight the pardons that are offered to them?
- Heb. 10. 29. These must expect a double wrath. Of whom much sorer punishment shall they be thought worthy, &c.
- From believing Satan before God.
2. Others, in imitation of the old Adam, believe the Devil before God, credit his suggestions, beyond all Gods Discoveries. O! What a black grain'd Sin is this? Saith the Devil, You have sinned against Light, and

therefore Christ will not favour you : Saith
 in God, Let the wicked forsake his way, and his
 thoughts, and I will abundantly pardon. Saith
 the Devil, You have sinned more than others,
 If you have provoked God exceedingly, and
 therefore never hope for saving benefit by
 Christ's death : Saith God, Cease to do evil,
 all learn to do well, come now, and let us reason
 together, though your sins be as scarlet, they
 shall be as white as snow. Saith the Devil, You
 have sinned not only against the Law, but
 against the Gospel, you have neglected Christ :
 if saith God, Every sin against the Son of man
 shall be forgiven. Saith the Devil, You have
 no right to Christ, it is in vain to come : Saith
 to God, Whosoever believeth shall not perish. Saith
 on the Devil, Your day of grace is past : Saith
 to God, To day, whilst it is called to day, hear
 his voice. Saith the Devil, God never in-
 tended you good, you are a Vessel of Dis-
 honour ; Saith God, As I live, I desire not
 the death of a sinner, but that he turn and live.
 Now I pray consider, whether God takes it
 kindly at your hands, that you should lay
 more weight on the Father of lies, than on the
 faithful God, who hath promised, and cannot lye ;
 Of who must cease to be God in that very mo-
 ment, wherein he ceaseth to be true. You
 perhaps deceive your selves with the Pharisees
 comforts, You are not as these Harlots, as these
 Scribes, no Drunkards, &c. but little think
 that you put the Lye upon God. You believe
 your enemy more than the Friend. O ! what a
 provocation is this ?

Isa. 55. 7.

Isa. 1. 16,
17, 18.

Luk. 12. 10.

Joh. 3. 16.

Heb. 3. 7,
13.

Ezek. 33.
11.

Joh. 8. 44.
Titus 1. 2.

Luk. 18. 11.

3. Others,

Through
Pride.
Rom. 10.3.

3. Others, through the pride of their hearts will not come (as yet) unto Christ. They have no mind to submit to the Righteousness of God. He is judged a proud man (without a Judge sitting on him) who when Condemned will not submit, will not stoop so low as to accept of a Pardon. I must indeed correct myself, men are willing to be justified: they would have their duties to purchase the peace and the favour of God: they scorn to be beholding to Christ. Thousands will be damned rather than they will have pardon upon the sole account of Christ's merits and Obedience. O the cursed Pride of heart! When will men cease to be wiser than God? To limit God? When will men be contented with Gods way and method of saving them by the blood of the Everlasting Covenant? How dare men thus to presume on the infinitely wise God? Is it not enough for thee that *thy destruction is of thy self*? Must thy Salvation be of thy self too? Is it not enough that thou hast wounded thyself? But wilt dye for ever, rather than be behold-
 ing to a plaister of free grace? Wilt be-
 ned unless thou maist be thine own Saviour? God is willing (So God loved the World, the City gave his Son) Art thou so proud, as by thine own will wilt not be beholding to God? Where wilt deserve, or have nothing. What Magistrate I say? Poor thou art, and yet proud, in that thou hast nothing but wretchedness and the punishment, and yet thou art talking of a Pardon. This is a provocation. God resisteth the proud and
 especially

Jeh. 3. 16.

Rev. 3. 17.

especially the spiritually proud. He that is proud of his Clothes and Parentage, is not so contemptible in Gods eyes; as he that is proud of his Abilities, and so scorns to submit to Gods methods for his salvation by Christ and his righteousness alone.

4. Others, through their ignorance and weakness stay off from Christ, in hopes of working that, which cannot be wrought without a Christ. Were their hearts so humbled and

Through hopes to prepare themselves, and make themselves fit for Christ.

melted, as such and such are, could they see all their sins subdued, were their hearts more fitted and prepared for to lodge so great a Friend, they would then close with the Promises, with Christ; whereas they should come to Christ; as soon as they apprehend they are poor, blind, and naked, for them he calls and invites. But alas! a sight of their wants, is a barr to their coming. They would have the *Fruits* first, and then the *Tree*; have their hearts purified, and then come to Christ (*Who is appointed by God to be Sanctification to them.*) God comes, by his Spirit, to convince them of their sinful nature and weakness, on purpose, that they seeing their necessity of Christ, might flye to him, as their *City of refuge*, and they are driven farther off, as by the sight of their sins and unworthiness. Whereas they should come to Christ, as to a *What Magazine and Store-house*, and wait on him, and, in the use of means, for the broken heart, and the pure heart, and all other spiritual mercies, which their Souls are yet destitute of, but they will not. O faithless Generation!

Rev. 3. 17.
18.

D

How

2u?

Mar. 9. 19.

Through
seeming
modesty.

How long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? Christ is put to the utmost of his patience, to bear with Unbelief.

5. Others, through some kind of seeming modesty and tenderness, delay in their coming to Christ. They are afraid of abusing the holiness and justice of God, if they should hope for any privilege in the blood of Christ, and mercies of God. "What mercy for me? I am a proud wretch, an unclean wretch, an enemy to God, a sifter of his Spirit? I do serve nothing but Hell, what Heaven for me? I have affronted the Majesty of the great God, and what? This God bestows Christ on me? Who can believe, that the Just God, who turned down the glorious Angels to Hell for one transgression, will save me, who have committed more sins in number, than the hairs on my head, than the sands on the Sea shore? And what Mercy for me? Shall I have a Christ? Will Christ accept of me, who have wronged his Father and him for so many years together? O! how long doth many an awakened Soul hang in doubts and fears, ere it will venture upon Christ's graciousness alone; and then, when the Soul hath long stood on the fears increase. "I have refused Christ so long; to all my former transgressions I have added this, my putting off Christ and Salvation, when freely tendered, and therefore sure I may not now come. And now if Christ offers them mercy, still they are fearful, they cannot believe that Christ

is serious and real. O! by these jealousies of Christ, you provoke him not a little. You are ready to say, This is too good news to be true; What is this, but to say, The Gospel is false, it is no true and faithful Word, 'tis not to be received with all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the World to save the greatest of sinners, blasphemers and persecutors of Christ? This is the great Sin that made Christ weep. You seldom find Christ weeping over the Idolaters of the World: I find him not weeping over *Sodom and Gomorrah*; but if *Hierusalem* refuse Christ, this makes him weep indeed, *Hierusalem, Hierusalem, O if thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things that concern thy peace!* Christ became a man of sorrows, was acquainted with griefs, &c. on hopes he should see of the travel of his soul, and be satisfied. It troubles Christ to see thee to go about to make God a Lyar to his Son, and to be denied thy loves and affections, for whose sake he submitted to his Fathers frowns. O! this sin of Unbelief hath great unkindness in it, and therefore no wonder if Christ upbraids for it. Luke 19. 42. Mar. 16. 14.

A man is properly upbraided, when as the kindness that hath been done to him, is revealed to him, together with his ungratefulness. But what shall I say? So far are Souls from coming to Christ, that they do seldom bewail this sin, and seldom seek to God for power against it; and though men pretend they cannot come to Christ, yet the truth is, they will not (so Mr. Fenner, in his wilful

Isa. 53. 3.

with a certainty (rather)

impunity hath abundantly proved.) The immediate cause of your not coming is not ly natural deficiency, but a moral opposition of Spirit against Christ.



CHAP. VII.

Their taking Christ partially : with conjugal affections : and without considering the cost they may be at.

Many take
Christ
partially.

sly. **I**F at length men are perswaded to come to Christ, yet they take him partially, as a King, Prophet, and Priest. As their Key is. They are contented he shall rule in some things, but not in all. Their drudgery to one or two lusts must be preferred before Christs Scepter and Government ; Some of Christs Yoak of Commandments will submit to ; but are not pleased if Christ shall impose what he will ; they will choose : here they will obey, in another thing, I pray have me excused : few are bold enough to say, Lord what wilt thou have me to do. Any thing Lord, I am called to thy footstool, the man of the East was, ready to trudge after thee to the ends of the Earth. As a Prophet. Here they divide too ; many the Christ

They will learn of Christ, but they must partly lean to their own understandings, and be taught for Doctrines, the Traditions of men. They are also partial in their close with Christ as their Priest. They hope to be saved partly by his mediation, and partly by their own. As the Papists, so many Protestant Professors are for a divided Christ; few are for exalting Christ alone, so as to renounce all other Lords, who have had Dominion over them, and to count all other Teachers besides Christ as vain, absurd, unsound, and weak. Few renounce all their own righteousness, as dung, to put the Crown on Christs head alone, to make Christ their alone Mediator, their alone Intercessor. No, they must have Cisterns of their own to keep their water in, and Sands of their own to build upon, and not to Christ, the Elect precious Stone, is refused for Key the Builders. How many hope to be pardoned, partly by Christ, and partly by their rudeness, and new Obedience? They lay their burden to God, Heaven, and Glory, partly from Christs merits, and partly from their own deserts; few whose hopes are founded in Christs satisfaction alone: but their hopes rise or fall according to what they do for him, and not according to what he hath done for them: their hopes of acceptance with God are more from their reformation, than from Christs entering within the rudder: If they have peace of Conscience, they ascribe it to their Prayers, rather than to Christs Intercession, and if they Pray in

secret in their Closet, and in their Family too, when both before were neglected, they hope to pass by this Bridge to Heaven; but if it be too short, they will set Christ to patch up what is wanting, that they may land on the other shore. Hence it is that many Professors are much more conscientious in their obedience to the Moral Law, than they are to the *Law of Faith*, for that they hope the obedience will speed them as much, if not more than Jesus Christ; but if they understand the *without Faith there is no pleasing God*, they will labour for a faith that may justify them, rather as an act of theirs, than in respect of the object Christ. Christ is still used only upon necessity, and to make up the want of somewhat else; but very few dare rest on the merits of Christ alone, so as to see all their righteousness to be as filthy rags. To few Christ made of God Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption. Let me ring a peal in your Ears, "You must receive Christ entirely, all Christ, and all of Christ, or you are not Christians, though you have a name to live. Christ is coming to distinguish names from things, and then you will curse the day you had the Name, or have of the Name; you will have your portion with Hypocrites. These are indispensable terms on which Christ will insist, *All none*; Christ as a Refiner, as well as a Saviour; Christ as a Lord, as well as a sacrifice.

Totum Christum & totum Christi.

Sixthly, If men are perswaded in the horrors of their Spirits to take Christ as Priest, Prophet and King, as a meer shift, to shift off their troubles and sorrows, and their sins (the occasions of them;) yet *their hearts stand off from Christ, as an Husband*, they have not conjugal affections to him, their hearts are not brought over to him, they receive him not into their bosoms, into their choicest affections all this while. There is still some secret lust more precious than Christ; he is not the chief Corner-Stone, whereas to them that believe he is precious, exceeding precious. Few, like Paul, determine to know nothing else save Christ, and him Crucified. One Christ was enough to take up Pauls thoughts to eternity; he did not care what he was ignorant of, so he knew Christ. Though he was brought up at Gamaliels feet, he laid down all his knowledge at Christs feet.

Many close with Christ without conjugal affections.

Si Christum noscitis, &c.

1. Are your hearts so drawn to Christ, as to account him the most necessary good in all the World? And all other things to be but adjuncts, so that you are able to live without them, but not without Christ? Liberty is sweet to a believer; but he can live in a Prison, yea, and live merrily too, he can sing there, if Christ be within the grate: Bread is sweet, but he can live in a Wilderness (a desolate howling desert) and sing there too, as Moses did, if Christ be there, yea, and prefer it before Canaan. If by Presence go not with us, carry us not hence. A Wilderness

From esteeming Christ the most necessary good.

with Christ is more precious than a *Canan* they without him. If ye were through Believers, or o the World would not be accounted among the h Necessaries. *One thing is necessary*, *Only w* not many. Other things may divert, but l may a little refresh, but Christ is the Necessar y.

Yea, the
only good.

2. *Is he in a sense the only good to your soul?* Heal Is nothing else good separated from Christ want give a Believer what you will without Christ et p it weighs nothing, he droops, as the Mar the gold, when the Sun withdraws. What is depr this whilst I am Christless? There is no Hus good but Christ. Riches are miscall'd goods to y they are not good save in their reference caus they relate to Christ, as they come from, I Christ, from that bosom of love, and S they advance Christ, and bring Christ abeir the Soul to nearer Communion. If they World in its glory, splendor and fulne but hinder communion with Christ, by deadning thir flatning, and distracting the heart, it hman comes a burthen: He is burthened w Cross friends, relations, enjoyments of all for tim that rob him of Christ, that eclipse the found of the Sun of Righteousness, through th thou unhappy interposals. *What was gain is com their ed loss.* As he enjoyeth much or little did Christ, thereafter he laughs, or weeps, eithe riseth or falleth. In Christ are Riches, b or o nours and friends: yea, Prayers, Sermon they Sacraments, &c. *The Lord is the Temp fake Col. 3. 11.* He is all in all; He is all things, and in ente things, not only by way of merit, whate put the

and they have, or expect, is on Christs account ;
 vers for only by way of conveyance, through him
 g they have all good communicated ; nor only
 Only way of casualty, as he worketh all in all ;
 rt, but he is all virtually, he is instead of all things
 Need to them, he makes up the defect of all things,
 If no Estate, no Friends, no Liberty, no
 Health, no Comfort, &c. yet the Believer
 wanteth nothing : *As having nothing, and* 2 Cor. 6.
 Christ *possessing all things.* Thus the Woman told 10.
 Mar the Persecutor, when he threatned her, to
 it is deprive her of her Husband, *Christ is my*
no Husband. Professours, look to your hearts,
 good to your affections, and then you will have
 nce cause to cry, *My leanness, my leanness, wo unto* Isa. 24. 16.
frome, I am a dry tree. 56. 3.

and Seventhly, *How few Christians have, in* Few confi-
st in their closing with Christ, considered the Cost der the
If they may be at ? They were told of the Cross, Cost be-
 ful, but the Cross was at a great distance, and fore-hand.
 dning things when remote, seem little. How
 it many little studied the import of that word
 w Cross? What a shameful, painful, tedious death
 for it imports? Something of trouble they would
 he undergo for Christ, but really they never
 the thought of dying for Christ, of spilling
 their hearts blood for Christ : So that they
 did not close with Christ understandingly,
 s, either they were ignorant of Christs person,
 es, or of the consequents of closing with him ; that
 they should be hated of all men for his Names
 sake ; that they must through much tribulation
 in enter into his Kingdom ; that they shall be
 put out of the Synagogues, and that the time
 cometh,

Mat. 10. 22.

Act. 14 22.

- Joh. 16. 2. *cometh, that whosoever killeth them, will that he doth God service. Hence when expectedly the rain descends, the floods*
- Mat. 7. 27. *and the winds blow and beat upon their buildings (the stately spiritual buildings, which have been erecting) they do not only to but, fall, and great is their fall. Even Churches are taken up by the roots. How many in times put away a good Conscience, and consequently Faith have made ship-wrack? How many Trees, whose fruit withereth, without fruit, dead, plucked up by the roots? They see not riches of Christ will make them amend all these losses and perills: they cannot lance the troubles of the Flesh with the comfort of the Spirit; the present evil things, the future inheritance in Heaven: the Temptations they meet with are unexpected. They are like some Ladies, that put forth to for pleasure; they launch forth towards Court but as the King of Navarre, who said, would not venture farther, than he could quickly retreat, in case of danger. The Storm makes them return to their Harbour; with the Dogg to the vomit, and the Sow to the mire. These poor Souls (O that their heart could bleed for them) were willing to come up to some of Christs terms, to lose little, nay, to suffer many things, but they would not endure to lose Life. O my Soul! watch in secret for them, when thou considerest, that the Children of the Kingdom (Church-Members) shall be cast out into outer darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. God*
- I Tim. 1. 19. *gain Trib*
- Jude v. 12. *Christi Rela*
- 2 Pet. 2. 22. *their ch*
- Gal. 3. 4. *gly.*
- Mat. 8. 12. *loosing true ble found*

will not abate a punctum of what he requires, he expects that we take up the Cross daily, that we have Life it self, as well as whatsoever else is dear and dear unto us. The Conditions imposed on his fallen Creatures are irreverfible, we will never floop lower. O ! this makes many a man to go away sorrowful. I befeech the Reader to go over with the work of Conversion again, now that the Cross is in fight, now that Tribulation arifeth ; Now let him fee, whether Christ is better than Name, Liberty, Friends, Relations, Lively hood, and Life it felf; and whether he can believe, that he that will fave his life, fhall lofe it, and he that will lofe his life for Christs fake, fhall find it, and that with advantage.

Matth. 5.

18.

Luke 9. 23.

Luke 14.

26.

Luke 9. 24.



CHAP. VIII.

Their fhuffling together false Signes of closing with Christ.

How do many Professours shuffle together a company of false Signes of closing with Christ ? How do they count them true and infallible, which are but questionable ; yea, which have been found in un-
found Hypocritical hearts ; and fo deceive them-

Many rest in false Signes of closing with Christ.

Their
groundless
Pleas, that
they have
closed with
Christ.

themselves, as if they had a Christ, and Grace within them? How do they live up these Signes comfortably all their dayes without a Christ? Excuse me, if I bring in the Pleas, and answer them briefly.

1. I am changed from what I was, *changed inwardly.* So was Saul, And it was so, that when he had turned his back to from Samuel, God gave him another heart. Thou mayest have another heart, and yet a new heart.

1 Sam. 10.
9.

1 Sam. 10.
10, 11.

1 Sam. 19.
23, 24.

2. I have extraordinary Gifts: I was unable to speak of God, tongue-tyed among the Saints; but I can now hold a discourse with them, and manage some of the highest services, as well as they. Might not Saul so much for himself? had not he the Spirit of Prophecy to admiration? When a company of Prophets met him, the Spirit of God came on him, and he prophesied among them: The people said one to another, What is this? Is come to the Son of Kish? Is Saul also among the Prophets? The Spirit of God was upon him also at another time, and he went on, and prophesied, untill he came to Naioth in Ramah; he stripped off his cloaths also, and prophesied before Samuel in like manner, and lay down naked all that day, and all that night. He was so great a Proficient, that (as one observes) As soon as he was admitted into the Society, he commenced Doctor, and prophesied with the best of them: They stood and prophesied, he went on, he could run and prophesie; yea, was so full of the Spirit of Prophecy, that

neither

neither eat, nor drank, nor slept, nor rose;
but lay down naked all the day, and all the night;
he was as in a trance all that while, and want-
ed neither meat, nor drink, nor clothes, nor
sleep.

3. I was full of revenge; but now I am
come to such a pitch of Religion, that I can
pass by Offences; yea, pass them by, when I
have an opportunity of punishing them that
affront me. Had not Saul so much Religion?

The Children of Belial said, How shall this man
save us? and they despised him, and brought him
no Presents; but he held his peace. He bears
much, that can bear being derided.

1 Sam.

10. 27.

4. Though I am meek in mine own Cause,
yet when the Name of God, and the Church
of God suffer, I can be very much inflamed.

So was hypocritical Saul, When Nahash the
Ammonite told the men of J besh, On this
condition will I make a Covenant with you, that
I may thrust out all your right eyes, and lay it for
a reproach upon all Israel, the Spirit of God came
upon Saul, when he heard those tidings, and his
anger was kindled greatly.

1 Sam.

11. 2, 6.

5. I am merciful to men, to mine Enemies,
because God hath shewed me mercy. So was
Saul, And Saul said, There shall not a man be put
to death this day, for this day the Lord hath
brought Salvation in Israel. Though he was
incited to revenge, yet he would not.

1 Sam.

11. 13.

6. When I have any Mercy from God, I see
God in the Mercy, and is not this a good Sign?
Truly no better than Saul had, To day the Lord
hath wrought Salvation in Israel.

1 Sam.

11. 13.

7. I engage God with me ; before I gain upon any considerable Undertakings. State not Saul so much ? Then said I, the Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made Supplication to the Lord ; I saw my self therefore , and offered a burnt offering. And Saul said unto Ahiah, Bring me the Ark of God, &c. And Saul sought the counsel of God, Shall I go down after the Philistines?

1 Sam. 13.
12.

8. When I pray, I look what becomes of my Prayer, and I suspend many of my Motives till I have an Answer. Saul the Hypocrite went so far ; he look'd after his Prayer, would not go down after the Philistines, because God answered him not that day.

1 Sam.
14. 37.

9. If I have no Answer to Prayer, I examine the Reason, and I am sure this is more than most Professours do. But not more than Saul did, When God answered him not that day, Saul said, Draw ye nigh hither all the chief of the people, and know and see wherein this hath been this day.

1 Sam. 14.
37. 38.

10. I am troubled for other mens sins, cannot but reprove sinners ; Is not this a sign of Sincerity ? I answer, No, unless we were sincere : When he was told, the people eat the blood, he was troubled, and reproved them too ; He said, Ye have transgressed.

1 Sam.
14. 33.

11. My Zeal against Sin is such, that I punish it where-ever I find it : I am impartial in my rebukes of sin : my Children, as well as my Servants, are corrected, if they transgress.

gainst the Lord. Hence I conclude mine
 State is good. And so might Saul. *As the* 1 Sam. 14.
Lord liveth, who saveth Israel, though it (the 29,
man) be in Jonathan my Son, he shall surely
live.

12. I conclude God loves me from a con-
 stant series of smiling Providences, that fol-
 loweth all that I take in hand: I find that the
 Lord blest me in my goings out and com-
 ings in; whatsoever I do doth prosper. And
 did not Saul strange Successes and Victories?
 When Israel was so low, that they had no
 weapons for Warr, nor Smiths to make any,
 Saul took the Kingdom over Israel, and fought
 1 Sam. 14.
 against all his enemies on every side, &c. and
 47.
 whithersoever he turned himself, he vexed
 them.

13. I find a readines to confess others better
 than my self; so did Saul with tears in his
 eyes. And Saul said, is this thy voice my Son
 1 Sam. 24.
 David? And Saul lift up his voice, and wept,
 16, 17.
 and he said to David, thou art more righteous
 than I.

14. I continue my duties when I fear God
 hath rejected me, even in desertion I keep on
 worshipping. So did Saul, when Samuel told
 him, God hath rejected thee, he desired Sa-
 mul to turn again with him, that he might
 1 Sam. 15.
 worship the Lord, and he prevailed with Sa-
 25, 30, 31.
 mul to turn again, and Saul worshipped the
 Lord.

15. I see a beauty in the Church and People
 of God. So did Balaam. How goodly are thy
 tents, O Jacob, and thy Tabernacles, O Israel!
 As

Numb.
24. 5, 6.

As the Valleys are they spread forth, as Grass by the Rivers sides, as the Trees, &c. which the Lord hath planted, and as Cedar trees beside waters.

Numb.
24. 13.

16. I cannot for the greatest advantage be brought to sin against God. Neither could Balaam Balak would give me his house full of Silver and Gold, I cannot go beyond the Commandment of the Lord, &c.

Numb.
24. 10.

17. I live up to the dictates of Conscience though I hazard the displeasure of great Christians thereby. So did that Sorcerer, though his anger was kindled against Balaam, and he bound his hands together.

Numb.
23. 10.

18. I have some sights of another World and I desire to spend an eternity with the Saints. So had Balaam, and did not he desire to live with the Lord? Let me dye the death of the righteous, and my last end be like his.

Act. 24. 25.

19. When I think of the day of Judgment I am affected with it, whereas before I was foolish and secure. So was Felix. As he reasoned of Righteousness, Temperance and Judgment to come, Felix trembled.

Rom. 2. 18,
19, 20, 24.

20. I am an Orthodox Protestant; so mayest thou be a Teacher too, thou mayest not be without the knowledge of Gods will, and approve the things which are more excellent, being instructed out of the Law; but confident that thou thyself art a guide to the blind, a light of them, which are in darkness, an Instructor of the foolish, a Teacher of the ignorant, which hast the form of knowledge, and are true to the truth in the Law; and yet fall short of the knowledge of God and of Heaven, yea the name of God is not

be blasphemed among the Gentiles, through
bee.

21. I am free from the scandalous evils of
the times, So were they in Peter, They had
escaped the pollutions of the world, yea, and that 2 Per. 2.
through the knowledge of Christ (which is more 20, 22.
than the moral Heathens ever had) and yet
were dogs and swine still.

22. I live inoffensively, none can lay any
thing to my charge. But was not Paul, whilst
at Christless, touching the Righteousness which is Phil. 3. 6.
Bene the Law blameless? At the same time he was
Persecuting the Church of God.

23. I have obeyed the Commandments of
God for a long time. I am not like a Mushroom,
soon up, and soon vanishing; I am a constant
Servant to the Commandments of God. So
was the young man in the Gospel; he said un-
to Christ, All these things I have kept from my Matth. 19.
youth up; what lack I yet? 20.

24. I have enlargements in duties, and sa-
tisfaction not my self with ordinary duties, but
make Conscience of extraordinary duties, I Matth. 23.
fast, and that oft. And did not the Pharisees 14.
make long prayer, and fast oft? I fast twice in
not the week. Luk. 18. 12.

25. I have joyes in Ordinances, the word
of the Lord is sweet and precious, I know
the time when it was not so. But did not
the Lord hear the word of God gladly? Did he
of let see an excellency in John? Had he not his
virtues and Graces in great esteem? Had he
of God a Reverend behaviour towards him?
God did not he observe him, and care to please
him?

him? He heard him, and that gladly: He much delighted in *Johns* Preaching.

Ezek. 33.
30.

26. Nay but I go farther, for I stir others to frequent Sermons. So did the Elders of Israel, Come I pray you, and hear what word, that comes forth from the Lord, &c.

Mar. 6. 20.

27. I obey as well as hear; I bear in order to practice. And was not Herod conformable to *Johns* Doctrine? though *John* preached not placentia, he was a rough Preacher, a burning, as well as a shining light, yet the Text tells us, he did many things.

Mat. 7. 28.
13. 54.
Mar. 1. 22.
11. 18.

28. When I hear the word, I am stricken with it. So were the people, when they heard Christ, they were astonished at his doctrine.

29. Many a time under a Sermon my heart and heart ake. So it was with Felix. As he reasoned of Righteousness, Temperance, &c. he trembled.

Isa. 1. 15.

30. But I pray and pray, oft as well as hear, and therefore is it not well? It may be enough, if thou hast no better evidence. When you make many prayers (when you multiply Prayer, when you add prayer to prayer) yet I will not hear.

Mat. 25.
8, 10.

31. There was a time, when I felt far more, than a dead man feels a mountain on him; but now it is heavy; 'tis burthensome. And was it not so to Cain? And he said unto the Lord, my punishment (or iniquity) is greater than I can bear. Was it not so to Judas, when he repented himself and restored the thirty pieces of silver; saying,

have sinned, in that I have betrayed the Innocent blood, and went and hanged himself?

32. I have desires after grace, and am willing to be at cost for it. So the foolish Virgins. And the foolish (being awakened out of their security in their form of Godliness) said unto the wise, give us of your Oyle: yea, they went to buy. They were willing to be at cost for the power of Godliness.

Marth. 25.
8, 10.

33. I associate only with Gods people, yea, with the purest and holiest. So did the foolish Virgins, they associated not only with Virgins, but with the wise Virgins. Both wise and foolish went out together to meet the Bridegroom.

Mat. 25. 1.

34. I consult Ministers for my Soul, and have high attainments. But wherein dost thou go beyond those, of whom it is said, They seek me daily, and delight to know my ways; as a Nation that did Righteousness, and forsook not the Ordinance of their God: they ask of me the Ordinances of Justice; they take delight in approaching to God? Wherein dost thou go beyond those in the Hebrews, who were once enlightened, and had tasted of the Heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and had tasted the good word of God, and the Powers of the world to come. If thou hast not better things than these, thou hast not savingly closed with Jesus Christ; for as yet thou hast nothing that accompanieth Salvation, from which Salvation cannot be separated.

Isa. 58. 2.

Heb. 6. 4, 5.

Heb. 6. 4.

Oh! I cannot but pitty these poor hear
 these *Almost-Christians*. Almost Christian
 and Almost Saved. I may say they are
 far from the Kingdom of God, and yet in
 sense they are farther than any others. O
 greatest difficulty hath been to undeceive the
 to unchrist these, I mean, to take off the
 fig-leaves, with which they have cover
 themselves, that they may come to Christ
 for clothing, and so prevent the appearing
 their nakedness. O! It is hard tough w
 to perswade a proud Pharisee, that all
 Righteousness will not feed him, that
 must fling away all, that he must have for
 thing else to shew for Heaven and Glory. O de
 How have men fled in our faces, when ho
 have told them, that yet they have nothing;
 that is essential to a Christian, as a Christian i
 or which makes a Christian a Christian, it b
 more than a picture hath of the essence of a h
 man? You may imagine a man, that hath b
 stown twenty or thirty years in building, b
 loth is he to pull down all again? Though
 fears the foundation is but on the Sands, b
 will rather venture, than begin all anew: He
 even ashamed to unravell all the Clue of
 ungrounded confidences. What begin up
 a new bottom? No, not he; and so Chri
 and he part. He takes his supposed grace
 be a Christ, or at least, that there must
 Christ, where such changes are, and so c
 out, *Soul take thine ease, thou hast goods*
up for many years, yea, for Eternity.

CHAP. XI.

*their Ungodliness : their Ignorance :
their Errors, &c.*

HAVE not many Professors been ungodly men, ἀσεβεις, men without worship? If we deny or withhold any part of that respect and honour, that is due unto God, be ungodliness; how much ungodliness hath there been, which is there still amongst us! Which of us hath been guilty of not giving God his right or due honour? Have not we suck'd in many ungodly Principles? As that it is in vain to worship him, there is no happiness (comparable to that the World doth afford) in communion with God; Religion is but a notion and fancy; Piety is the only Piety; This world must be as it is, whatever becomes of Conscience, &c. Have not we been guilty of ungodly thoughts? Have not we thought, that God is not gracious, but we may take liberty in sinning; must he take no notice of what we think, speak or do, yea, that there is no God? Have not we spoken ungodly words? have not we uttered the very hard speeches, which ungodly sinners speak? Have not we spoken against Gods servants? yea, have we been afraid to speak against

Professors
Ungodli-
ness.

Jude 4.

Psal. 50. 21.

Job 22.

12, 13.

Psal. 14. 1.

his Servant Moses? And have not many of our deeds been ungodly, yea, though we have ungodly committed them? God hath always been sorely provoked by ungodliness;

- 2 Per. 2. 7. Flood swept away the World of the Ungodly but yet we might have been ungodly under the Law, at a cheaper rate, than under the Gospel; because the Gospel gives us more clear, and certain notions of Gods excellency and glory, and layes more obligation upon us to respect God, and therefore is led a doctrine according to godliness. The ungodly shall not stand in judgement, neither the world to come, nor in this world.
- Jude 15. day of Judgement is appointed on purpose to take vengeance of ungodly persons.

Their Ignorance of God.

1 Cor. 15.

34.

Joh. 4. 22.

First, Have not some Professors been, still are, altogether ignorant of God? have not the knowledge of God; I speak (saith the Apostle) to your shame. May not be said of many of us, Ye worship ye not what? Do not many Professors worship God upon no other account, than the Reason did their Jupiter, or the Ephesians their Diana, viz. because he is the God of the Nation wherein they were born; because he is their fore-fathers God, because his worship is in credit, and because the Magistrate commands that God be worshipped? Have we worshipped God by Tradition, more than by Conviction of Judgement? Hath not been worship been to the unknown God? God only, in a Scripture sense, unknown to those that do not know him experimentally and

Acts 17. 23.

Etically. Now, have we tasted and seen, that the Lord is gracious? Have not we said, we knew God, and yet kept not his Commandments? He that saith so, is a Liar, and the truth is not in him: Hereby know we that we know him, if we keep his Commandments. If we do not thus know God, we are none of his Children; he hath no Child so little, but he knoweth his Father: They shall all know me, from the least to the greatest. Our being the People of God in Profession, will not secure us from ruine. My people are destroyed for lack of Knowledge. The Lord Jesus will come in flaming Fire, to render vengeance on us; for he will so deal with all that know not God.

Psal. 34: 8.

1 John 2.
4: 3.

Jer. 31. 4.

Hof. 4. 6.
2 Thes. 1. 8.

Secondly, How erroneous have been Professors? None can be such a stranger to our Israel, as to be ignorant, that a Spirit of De-
lusion hath been let loose abroad, from Dan to Beersheba, so that the Pillars of Religion are shaken, the most concerning Truths questioned, if not exploded with scorn and contempt. "Have not some made God the Author of Sin? Have not others forgot that they were Creatures; and have assumed the liberty, or rather highest impudence, to say, that they were Godded, and that the fulness of the God-head doth dwell bodily in every Saint, in the same measure as it did in Christ Jesus, whilst he dwelt upon the Earth? Nay, have not others affirmed, Jesus Christ to be a Bastard? Have not others said, They were Christ, and would,

Their Errors.

"in the pride of their hearts, have others
 "worship them? Have not some deny
 "Christ's Deity, affirming, That he was
 "God essentially, but only nominally;
 "that his pure Nature was stained with Sin
 "How many have denied the Trinity of Persons
 "sons? How many, under pretence that
 "Law of Works binds not, have abrogated
 "all the Laws of Christ, and turned themselves
 "Libertines? How many have, under
 "tence of advancing the Spirits testimony
 "maintained Sanctification to be a dirty
 "lification, and cryed down all marks
 "signs? How many have held, that
 "Doctrine of Repentance, Fasting, and
 "miliation, are too Legal for the Spirit
 "Christian? How many have denyed Christ
 "sitting in a Body at the right hand of God
 "How many have denyed his Satisfaction
 "Purchase? Have not some held, that
 "is no Heaven, no Hell, no Resurrection
 "from the Dead, and that the Beast and
 "have one common end? How many
 "been altogether for Inspirations, and
 "sets'd themselves above the Sphere
 "Ordinances? How many have denyed
 "ter Baptism, the Supper, the Ministry
 "yea, the Scriptures of God? How
 "have accounted it their highest Perfection
 "to sin away all tenderness of Conscience
 "and look'd upon themselves the more
 "by how much Villany they could be guilty
 "of beyond others?

How can we refrain from weeping out our
 Yes, how should our ears tingle, to see
 and bear these Abominations? How hath the
 God of Truth been provoked by these cursed
 miscreants? What horrible affronts have been
 offered to the dread Majesty of God thereby?
 How many thousand Souls have perished by
 these Delusions? And what a dishonour hath
 come to the Christian Religion by reason
 thereof, I cannot express. Certainly (saith
 one) there is more deadly mischief, and high-
 er offence to God in them, than in those practi-
 cal evils, which honest hearts profess to abhor:
 These, as they are immediate fruit of our spiri-
 tual part, so they do more immediately strike
 at the God of Spirits in his truth and holiness:
 And as Religion is the highest Concernment of
 the Soul, so the depravation of Religion must
 needs be the most dangerous and damnable.
 When Hezekiah heard the blasphemies of
 Rabshekah, it is said, He rent his clothes,
 and covered himself with sackcloth, and went
 into the House of the Lord, and said, This is
 a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of blas-
 phemy. If an Assyrian Blasphemer was so
 great a troubler, what troublers are Nominal
 Christians, thus abusing their Profession, and
 the God they pretend to serve.

But alas! How little have we been affect-
 ed with the Floud cast out of the Serpents mouth
 after the Woman? Though the Trumpet hath
 sounded, *Wo, wo, wo*, to the Inhabi-
 tants of the Earth, because of Spiritual
 Plagues; *We have been puffed up, and have*

Considera-
 tions to
 promote
 mourning
 for errors.

B. Hall.

Professors,
 miscarri-
 ages as to
 errors.

Not
 mourning
 for them.

not

not mourned; We have spoken laughing of those sins; We have not considered Judgement, as coming from the Lord, token of his wrath (in giving up so many of our Country-men to strong delusions, to bewitching lies) We have shewed little Zeal for the glory, that hath been blemished by these detestable things: Neither have we pittied many that have followed these pernicious words. How little have we mourned for them, though the Apostle saith, *their damnation sheweth not.*

No using
means to
reduce the
erroneous.

How few means have we used for their reformation? hardly put up a Prayer for them, not admonished them, but let them alone to perish in their delusions? Not so much as to request an able Minister to have recourse to these poor deluded Souls in order to the bringing of them from the Idols of their own brains?

Not pre-
paring
Antidotes
against the
Infection.

How little have we endeavoured to strengthen our selves? to prepare Antidotes against this Infection? We have not studied the Scriptures, that we might warn the ungodly and resist gain-sayers, and be established in the present Truths; but, though we have seen many shipwreck their Faith and Conscience, yet we have been high-minded, and have not feared.

Not dis-
liking
them.

Have we not been guilty of not expressing our dislike of the wayes of Hereticks as we should? We have not shunned them as we ought. To maintain a Party, to strengthen a Faction, how have we too much countenanced

anced them? their fellowship hath not been
ough avoided. How little have we regard-
those Apostolical injunctions? Now I be-
ech you, Brethren, mark them, which cause
visions and offences, contrary to the Doctrine
which ye have learned, and avoid them; for
they that are such, serve not our Lord Jesus
Christ, but their own bellies; and by good
words, and fair speeches, deceive the hearts
of the simple. And if any man obey not our
word, note that man, and have no company
with him, that he may be ashamed. We have
hunn'd the house where one with the Plague-
ore dwells, but we have not with-drawn
from them that cause to err from the words of
Knowledge.

What shall I say? We have not so hearti-
ly and vigorously contended for the Faith, which
was once, and but once, delivered to the
Saints, as we ought. The Lord humble us
for our luke-warmness. We have cryed up
Moderation, and counted him an Hagio ma-
tix, that hath appeared against the abomi-
nations of the Head. Sure we have not been
valiant for the Truth upon the Earth. We
have not sparkled so much the more in an ho-
ly Zeal, because others have perverted the
right wayes of the Lord. Because Fools have
not been answered, they have grown Wise in
their own conceit. We have been afraid to med-
dle with some, because they have (unreasona-
bly) throwed themselves under the name
of Saints; but Paul with-stood Peter to the
face, when Truth was like to suffer. I do not

Rom. 16.
17, 18.

2 Thess. 3.
14.

Prov. 19.27

Not con-
tending
for the
Faith.

Jer. 9.3.]

Prov. 26.]
4, 5.

Gal. 2. 11.

in

in all this go about to justifie undue rigour. God knows how for base respects, intermingling names of our own, we have been too severe against some things of less moment, some circumstances of Church Government, &c. much zeal about *mine and mine*: we have been too imposing of what lyes dark and obscure in the book of God: and this while our Enemies *tares* have been suffered to grow, and the Fundamentals of our Religion have been (at least) endangered. But that which hath been *Englands Sin*, is too much permitting and countenancing of damnable Doctrines. What shall I say? When God hath said, *Who is on my side? who!* We have hardly answered our selves. We have been *doubtfull in Faith*, wavering and reeling, not quite nor quite off, but staggering and tottering. Our Religion hath been rather *Opinion*, than Faith, so that we have stood looking on as *Neuters*, whilst Hereticks have made *chandise of Souls with fained words*. The *Truths* of God have lye loose upon hearts, they have not been *fained* by the *Master of the Assemblies*, as *nails in a place*: and having little experience of what we profess to know, hence luke-warmness followeth on course, or blind zeal for our Ancestors Religion.

O how by reason of the great defect amongst us hath *the way of Truth been evil* kept of? The common Enemy fastneth all on Religion. They will not distinguish between *Truth* and *Error*, yea, between *Truth*

2 Pet. 2.3.

2 Pet. 2.2.

and Hereſie, and never would put a difference
between the *Orthodox* and the *Heterodox*;
if any one that had been called a Christian
into any damnable Errors or Practices,
Christians ſuffered thereby; which forced
the Primitive Fathers to Pen Remonſtran-
ces, Confessions of Faith, and Apologies,
that they might clear Chriſt and his Church
from being Mother or Nurse to ſuch a cursed
Progeny. And though ſome amongſt us
live by *Confessions of Faith*, and otherwiſe,
as witnesses againſt Errors, yet doubtleſs
their Conſciences will tell us, that we have
not by Faſtings, Prayers, Studies, and all En-
deavours improved all our time and Spirits
in the ſuppreſſing and drying up the flood of
the Serpent, the Soul-deſtroying flood, as we
ought; but if we have had any Acrimony of
Spirit, we have let it forth upon them, that
we croſs us about *Modes* of Government;
rather than againſt them, who have ſhaken
the Foundations of our Religion. When I
conſider the multitudes of *Seſts* that have
arisen, and are ſtill amongſt us, I wonder not
that the Goſpel hath had a *miſcarrying Womb*,
and dry Breasts. In all times Chriſtianity hath
ſuffered hereby. *Zozomen* ſaith, that many
would have followed Chriſt, but they were dis-
courage'd by the divers Doctrines amongſt his
Disciples. *Coryſtoſtom* proteſteth that an Hea-
then told him, He would become a Chriſti-
an, but he knew not to what party of them to
go, there are ſo many opinions and contentions
among Chriſtians. When the multitude of
Christians

*Nescio quod
dogma eli-
gam, quod
preſe an.*

Acts 2. 32,
33.

Christians were one-soul'd, then Fear, and
and Reverence upon all the people; But now
one saith I am of Paul, &c. Now Religion
in derision, and Atheism grows exceed
O that mine head were as waters, &c.



CHAP. X.

Their want of Love to God.

Professors
want of
Love to
God in
Christ.

Mat. 23. 36.

Prov. 26.

3ly. **W**Ant of Love to God is another
branch of ungodliness
amongst Professors. This is so great a branch
of ungodliness, that Jesus Christ hath reduced
the Commandments of the first Table
cerning the Worship of God to this
one, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God
thy Heart, and all thy Soul, and all thy
Indeed every one pretends to love
hardly ever met with a person but
loved God: He that hateth, dissemble
his lips. God may say truly, How can
say, I love thee, when thy heart is not
God is loved, but not for himself,
what he brings. God is used, and the
is embraced. If God comes empty
or with his hands full of trouble, mil*

Farewell. God is loved, but with a secondary love; Professors are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. God must stand by, and give place to sensuality, therefore they say unto God depart, &c. They like God whilst they may enjoy their pleasures too, whilst they may not be infringed. Let but a few things be considered, and we will see how much want there is of love to God in Christ.

2 Tim. 3. 4.
Job. 21.

1. Whom we love we are not ashamed of. The Mothers is such to her Child, and Gods to us, *he is not ashamed to be called our God.* But do not we conceal our Title to God in some Companies that hate him? How do we throw off our Livery, and dare not be known to have walked with God. Remember *he that is ashamed of me, &c.*

Evidenced in being ashamed of a Relation to him.

Mar. 8. 38.

2. Parents are troubled when their Children are dishonoured, and so Children when their Fathers; but are our Souls vexed, *rack'd with the filthy conversations of Sodomites?* Where are the Rivers of waters? Where is my horror because men keep not Gods Commandments?

Not troubled for his dishonour.
2 Pet. 2. 8.
Psal. 119.
53. 158.

3. Those we love, their Enemies are ours; Parents Enemies are the Childrens Enemies. What do we hate them, *that hate God, yea, with perfect hatred?*

Not hating Gods Enemies.
Psal. 139.
21.

4. True lovers of God hate themselves for not loving God enough. How oft do they sigh? "Wretch that I am, to grieve the God, to estrange my self from God, to select myself to be with God, to stay with him no longer! How can I content my self with these

Not hating self for not loving God.

"these transient glances, with these sudden
 "casts of mine eye, and to be instantly
 "wheeled off from my God again? O God
 "fleeing mind of mine! when will it fix
 "God, and abide with him? O this gad-
 "heart of mine! when will it center in
 "true and perfect happiness? When I
 "mine eye from earthly objects, either
 "am displeased with them, or there is
 "better thing that draws off my mind
 "heart: But dare I say so of God? that
 "is unlovely? and yet I have been w
 "of him.

Not trust-
ing him.

5. Did we love God, we would trust
 we dare trust our very lives in a friends hand.
 But we dare not so trust God. What would
 a carnal man give that he had but his life
 health in his own dispose? When he is
 he had rather it were in his own hands to
 ply his wants, than in Gods; for he thinks
 would go better with him. We trust God
 little. We think our selves quite undone
 when we have nothing save a God and a
 promise to trust to.

Not joying
nor griev-
ing as
they ought.

6. How little do we joy in the presence
 God and Christ, and grieve for their absence.
 Is God all in the want of all, and is God
 All in the enjoyment of all? Can we
shew us the Father and it sufficeth us.
 we have no Fig-tree left, can we rejoice
 the God of our Salvation? Can we say,
As Ziba, now that my Lord is come, now
the Lord stoops to dwell in houses of clay.
worldlings! take your riches, and make the

of them, I envy you not, I have enough in God. Do we so grieve for the absence of God and Christ, that nothing but God and Christ can make amends? O that our happiness, life, comforts, were folded up in God and Christ! Can we live no more without God and Christ, than a Beam without the Sun?

7. True Lovers are thoughtful to please the Beloved. But is there any thing that we think less of than pleasing of God? A true lover of God is alwayes proving, *what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God. Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.* He is still searching that he may know more wherein he may please God, as willing alwayes to be more useful for God: What have we to do more? but how seldom do we ask our hearts, what way may we walk in all well pleasing? How seldom do we design for the glory of God?

8. True Lovers are open handed, and bountiful to God: they bestow readily and freely any thing they have on him: they will part with their Isaac's, their dearest things, with Limbs, &c. Rutherford that *man of God*, washed every limb a man, every bone a man, every hair a man to set forth the praises of God. When God calls for limbs, can we say, farewell to them? Are there not some things dear to us that we cannot spare them to Christ? Are we so taken with Christ, that our hearts are dis-engaged from the love of other things? Is every thing vile, but Christ?

Not
thought-
ful to
please him.
Rom. 12. 2.
Eph. 5. 10.

Is all you part from instantly supplied in loves and smiles of Christ?

9. True Lovers of God are content with nothing by way of return from God, only love from him: returns of love they have. They do not pray save for love, they go not in before God for Corn, Wine, &c. but for love, for God to open his heart to take off his mask from his lovely face, shew them the light of his countenance. They are not like the Raven, that came to Noah more for necessity, than delight. Yea, in the way of thy Judgements, O Lord, have waited for thee; the desire of our Soul is thy Name, and to the Remembrance of thee: my Soul have I desired thee: in the Night, with my Spirit within me, will I seek thee early.

Not praising him.

Cant. 5.

10, 11, 12,
13, 14, 15,
16.

10. True Lovers are wont to praise one another: But how seldom do we set forth praises of Christ? Love is witty, full of consequence, witness the Spouse, My Beloved white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand, his head is as the most fine gold, his locks are bushy, black as a Raven, his eyes as the eyes of Doves by the Rivers of water washed with milk, and fitly set, his cheeks as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers, his lips like Lillies dropping sweet smelling myrrour, his hands are like gold Rings set with the Beryl, his belly is as bright Ivory overlaid with Sapphires, his legs are as Pillars of Marble set upon sockets of fine gold, his countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the Cedars, his mouth is most

...a, he is altogether lovely. *This is my Be-*
loved, &c. I'll praise thee with uprightness: Psal. 119.
I'll praise thee seven times a day. Yea, Da- 7, 164.
vid thought seven times a day too little, and Serries, i.e.
therefore he called in all the Creatures of Saxifrage.
Heaven and Earth, Air and Sea, to praise Psal. 148:
God, the Dragons in the deep must not be
silent. True Lovers praise God as much as
they can, they exalt God to the utmost of
their power: and then, from a sense that God
is above all their praise, they would have eve-
ry thing that hath breath to praise the Lord,
Yea, an inanimates too far to joyn in the
praise, Doth Praise wait for God?

11. Did you love God, you would love Not loving
 every thing of God: Do you love his Omni- all of God
 nescence, his Justice, his Holiness? True and Christ.
 love to Christ sticks not barely in the Person of John 13.
 Christ, but reacheth to all that have an Union 34, 35.
 with him. Do we love Christ mystical, as 1 Jo. 4. 19.
 well as personal? Are we of Catholick Spirits?
 The Apostle is peremptory, and brandeth
 them all as Liars, that pretend to love God
 and Christ, and do not love Saints.

12. True Lovers of God thirst after nearer Not thirst-
 communion with God, My soul followeth hard ing after
 after thee. The soul still encroacheth upon nearer
 God. Let me see thy Glory, saith Moses, Commu-
 though he saw more than Mortals were (com- nion.
 munion) permitted to behold, yet Semper
 desirous, Much would have more. As the Psal. 42. 1, 2.
 soul panteth after the Water-brooks, so pant-
 my Soul after thee, O God: my Soul thirst-
 for God, for the living God, when shall I

come and appear before God? A true Lover of God is under an holy impatience, till he see his face darkly in a glass: He would faine see his face with open face. O! (saith such a Soul) the distance between Christ and me is too great. O! I cannot but groan earnestly, when I consider I am absent from the Lord, whilst I am present in the body. Lord, (said Austin) I will dye, that I may enjoy thee; I will not dye, but I will dye: I desire to dye, that I may see Christ; and refuse to live, that I may dwell with Christ. The broken Rings, Contracts, and Espousals, content not the true Lover, but he longs for the Marriage day. Here are Clouds that oft pass 'twixt God and my Soul. O that I were above them! Here, I cannot see and enjoy, the fear of losing so sweet a thing abates the comfort of fruition; but there will come an eternal day, that shall never be night.

Being
weary of
his Com-
mands.

1 Joh. 5. 3.

Mal. 1. 13.

Heb. 12. 2.

13. If you loved God, his Commandments would not be grievous to you. It cannot be easily posed: Love hath a kind of Almightiness in it, so that heavy burdens made light, and almost impossible things come feasible. But of how many things we say, *What a weariness is it?* How are we haled by Governours, by Conscience, by the terrors of the Law unto Duty. How like Slaves chain'd to Gallies, you must work, though sore against your wills. If you love God, you would count nothing tedious, save dulness, in his service. It would only be the Weight. O the burden

Formality, Pride, &c! But O the pleasures of the wayes of God! *His yoke is easie, his burden light.*

14. Did you love God, you would be jealous, lest it should go ill with Gods affairs. The loving Mother trembleth, lest the Child should suffer, when she is off from it. But alas! how few *Elies* are there, *whose hearts tremble because of the Ark?* Do you really fear, lest Formality should eat out the Power of Godliness, lest Traditions should make void the Commandments of God, lest your Trades should spoil your Communion with God.

You may easily imagine, the want of Love to God, must needs be a great Provocation. O to pretend love, and yet *Judas*-like, betray Christ with a kiss; to say, *Hail Master*, and yet prefer a base Lust before him? What indignity is it to the husband, that the Wife loves the Slave before him? The World should be your Slave, but it hath got the heart, the bosom; and Christ must stand without doors till his locks are wet. O that God should stoop so low, as to love you, as to make you the birth of his everlasting counsels of love; that he should carry you long in the womb of his eternal purpose! This goodly habrick of heaven and Earth hath not been erected, but as a Stage, whercon he would shew his love to you. And did he not, in the fulness of time, purchase you by the blood of his *First-born*, yea, of his only begotten Son, and for this very end, that he might gain your love, as well as reveal his own love?

Not fearing how it goes with God affairs.

1 Sam. 4. 13.

Considerations tending to humble us, for want of Love to God.

Cant. 5.

Mat. 22.
36, 37.

Deut. 10.
12.

And yet that your love should not be like *Eccho*, which returneth what it receiveth. Sure you should cast back Gods beams of love upon himself. This is all he expects, *Son, give me thine heart*: All the command he layes upon you, is, in one word, *Love him*. God might have commanded *Children* to be sacrificed, to pass through *Fire*. O! what a favour is it to love the Lord? That God will honour us so far, as suffer us to love him? And yet we love nothing, any sordid base Lust, rather than God. We would count it a favour, if a Prince would give us a privy Key, to come to him when we please: Here is more honour, we may have recourse to the bosom of God when we will. God would have us to love him *with all the heart, with all the soul*. The Lord would not lose one grain of our love. O that we should deny him that which he (with reverence be it spoken, and thought on) is so fond of. And now Israel, what doth the Lord require of thee, but to love him, and to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy Soul. God requires not now Calvary upon a thousand Hills, or Rivers of Obedience. Only, Love me, Love me, Love me heartily, constantly, chiefly; and yet we deny him who loves us. O! I hate my self whilst writing that I love the Lord so little, so seldom, was he that made me, and not I my self: he hath wonderfully formed me, and wonderfully preserved me, and shewed many wonders in the deeps to me. O! what shall I do to

like the Lord with a superlative love? O I am ready to say, *Let me love nothing, if I love not thee; nay, love nothing, till I love thee!* O that you would grieve abundantly for want of Love to God! You have past as through the Red Sea, you have been as the flaming Bush, God hath looked after you, as if he minded none but you, you have been as the Signet on his right hand, nay more, you have been engraven on his Palms, and what, not love the Lord? Shame upon you, that you can dote upon the dark, filthy, dirty World, and neglect the Lord of Glory. All the Affections you have, God gave them, (when he gave thee a reasonable Soul) but for this end, that you should place them on himself, and not on his Enemy. *Is it not hard measure that God should be denied Love, when he gave you power to love?* If a Friend sends you Bottles of Wine, it is hard, that when he comes to you, you should deny him a taste of his bounty. Believe it Sirs, whatever you do for the Lord, unless you Love him, yea, unless you Love him more than any thing else, it is not accepted. *Though you give your Body to be burned, and have not Charity, it profiteth you nothing.* *Though you bring forth fruit, yet you are empty Vines, because you love Self, not God.* Your most exquisite Services are but pieces of dead Carrion, unless they be seasoned with the Salt of Love. This People draw nigh with their lips, but I abhor them, and their Duties, because the Dove is without an heart. Whatever a

1 Cor. 13. 3.

Hos. 10. 1.

1 Cor. 16.
22.

man gives me, if his heart be not in it, I fling it : God much more. What shall I say? The Holy Apostle counts him worthy of a Curse that loves not Jesus Christ. *If any man love not the Lord Jesus, let him be Anathema Maranatha.* And is it not sad to be cursed to the coming of Christ? He deserves it, that loves not Christ, and he must and shall be forced to own the Righteousness of God in sentencing him to Eternal flames, who might have been secured against them, had he but loved Christ more than a base dunghil Lust.



CHAP. XI.

Their evil surmises of God.

Their evil
surmises of
God.

4ly. **E**vil surmises of God is another piece of ungodliness found too frequently among some of the more raised Professors, even as have the root of the matter in them. I do not rather insist on this sin, because the thoughts of God are the fuel which maintains the fire of Religion: without which it soon decayeth and is extinguished.

Miscalling
his love-
tokens.

1. *Do not we miscall Gods love-tokens?* Hath not God sent thee many love-tokens by his Spirit to assure thee that he owns thee?

delights in thee, as his Spouse ? For thee to question thy relation to him upon every turn must needs be grievous to him, how grievous then is it for thee to deny all his tokens of grace and love to thy Soul, and to count them but delusions, but the works of the Infernal Spirit, transforming himself into an Angel of Light ? To call light, darkness, good, evil, sweet, bitter, the work of Christ, the Devils work, is ill resented by the Lord, it goeth unto his heart. You that are Husbands, Wives, Parents, Children, cannot endure to have your love and fidelity suspected upon every base suggestion and whisper. Believe it God takes notice, and laies to heart all your jealousies of him, all your base unworthy censures of him.

2. *How ill are Gods Providences resented ?* Although God hath told you there is a beauty in their contexture, that *things present and things to come are yours*, that *all shall work together for good*, that your Providential losses, as well as your Providential enjoyments, that your changes, as well as your settlements, your wants as well as your abundance shall all be Sanctified to you : yet how few, with that blessed man, *blest the Lord, when taking away ?* And with Paul, *rejoyce, yea glory in tribulations ?* God assures you, that your sicknesses, reproaches, wants, shall do you good, yea death shall do you good, all shall be good, or do you good, all shall be food, or physick, out of the eater shall come forth sweetness, even from Gods desertions you shall have advantages, your

III. resenting Gods Providences.

1 Cor. 3. 22.
Rom. 8. 28.

Job 1. 21.
Rom. 5. 2, 3.

your very thorns shall drop honey, shall be grapes, yet notwithstanding what ha
thoughts have you of God under such dispe
sations? Didst thou only accuse thy
judge thy self, abhor thy self, it were well
but in speaking against thy self, thou falle
soul upon God himself by questioning his lo
from these providences. Deny thy self wh
thou wilt, but beware of a denial of God
love, and of the Spirit of grace, that ha
taken up his lodgings within thee: O that
melancholly doubting Christians would con
der of this (too seldome suspected) prov
cation and unkindness of theirs towards God
O! take up, and keep up better thoughts
God, what ever his carriage be towards you
Though he stay you, yet trust in him. Wh
will you be as David, who though beleagu
red with Enemies, yet kept up good thought
of God, he doubted not of Gods pittie,
Gods favour, and protection, and therefore
I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people
that have set themselves against me round about
Though an host should encamp against me
my heart shall not fear, &c. in this will
be confident. In what? Why that the Lord
my Light, and my Salvation, and the strength
of my life. God hath not spent all his store
he hath enough for me, he will not suffer
to be tempted above what I shall be able to be
but will with the temptation make way for
escape. And hath not God told thee, that
the mountains shall depart, and the hills be
moved, yet his loving kindness shall not depart
from

Psal. 3. 6.

Psal. 27.

3. v. 1.

Isa. 54. 10.

from thee, neither shall the Covenant of his peace be removed? But alas! Thou canst entertain good thoughts of God in fair weather, but let them fall in a storm: then it is, Master, Mark. 4. 38. carest thou not that we perish. Thou canst trust in God when he carrieth himself as a Friend, and answereth all thy requests, and granteth all thy desires, but not so, when he seemeth an Enemy. Canst thou with Paul say, I am perswaded, that neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor Rom. 8. 38, 39. height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord? Whilest the Candle of the Lord shines on thy Tabernacle, whilest thy bones are full of marrow, whilest thou wastest thy feet in butter, whilest every Mordecai boweth in the gates, whilest thou hast dewes on thy heart, meltings and enlargements in Ordinances; so long thou canst keep up good thoughts of God and his love; but let the Scene be altered, let the Sun wrap up it self in a Cloud of darkness, let the rod lie on the back, and the Arrows of the Almighty pierce the heart, and then not only grace within is questioned, but the love of God without. I am cast out from before thine eyes, his mercy is clean gone. Then all men are lyars, even Samuel himself. But alas! how ignorant art thou of the methods of God? Doth not he chasten every son that he receiveth? Should not Heb. 12. 6, 7, 8. he have liberty to use what rod he pleaseth, whilest all are for thy Profit, that thou maist partake

Rom. 8. 29. *partake of his Holiness ? Might not Christ*
 Phil. 3. 20. *have had ill surmises of his Father upon high*
 Mat. 20. 23. *er grounds, than any thou canst name ? What*
 Col. 1. 24. *art thou to hope for milder usage from God*
than he shew'd to his own Natural Son ?
thou art predestinated to be conformable to Christ
to be partaker of his sufferings, to drink of his
cup, wilt thou doubt thy filiation from the
filling up the sufferings of Christ ?

Conclu-
 ding thence
 sadly of
 Gods in-
 tentions.

3. *How do some draw sad conclusions from*
Gods Providential dispensations concerning his
intentions for the future ? When they lose dear
Relations, an Husband, or the Wife of their
bosome gone, a sweet Child snatcht away,
and perhaps by inadvertency ; O then
sooner can we enter into the house of mourn-
ing, but we hear cries from you, O my hypocrite !
O my formality ! O this is one of Gods
Arrows of Vengeance ! O ! God is begin-
ning his Controversie, which will never cease
till it laies me as low as Hell ! Whereas you
should entertain other thoughts of God, viz.
" That now he is removing the Idols of your
" house ; now he is weaning your hearts from
" Creatures, that he may have all your love
" he knew how much Spiritual Communion
" you have lost by the company of your Rela-
" tions, and now he himself would have
" more of your company ; now he would
" have you to delight your selves more in
" himself ; now he hath but dryed the stream
" (a weak, unsatisfying stream) that you may
" drink and drink abundantly of the pure
" Chrystal waters, that drop from the blessed
" Fountain."

" Fountain."

"Fountain immediately; now God hath a
 blessed design of *grace* to prepare you for
 glory; he is now making the *earth* an *howl-*
ing Wilderness, that you may long for *Ca-*
naan; he is now leaving you to naked walls,
 that he himself may fill them; he is now
 turning all out of doors, that you may have
 the more liberty to treat with his Majesty
 with the less disturbance, without inter-
 ruption. Alas! you know not how unkind
 and burdensome, yea treacherous your
 Friend, your Relation might have been, if
 continued longer to you; you know not
 what a dishonour to God and to your selves,
 he might have been, if longer continued
 in the land of the living, and therefore to
 preserve him from scandal, and your selves
 from heart-breakings thereby, God hath in
 mercy, pity, and faithfulness, removed
 him, taking him away (it may be) from
 the evil to come. Few put these Com-
 ments upon Gods Providences towards them;
 but commonly take all in the worst sense they
 can.

4. *How do some instantly call in question*
Gods love, if Evidences be not seen, if they be
not fairly writ, so as the soul can read them?
 But may not the money be in the Sacks mouth,
 though the Brethren see it not for a while?
 Yea though the Soul hath had a welcome
 from God, yea many a welcome, yet how
 soon is the Soul so crest-fall'n, that it is afraid
 to go into Gods presence? and through the
 power of *Satan* and *Melancholy*, duty, yea
 many

Calling
 Gods love
 in question
 for want of
 Evidences:

many duties have hereby been intermitted. This provokes God exceedingly : What When you have had his *Staffe*, and his *Breasts*, when you have had ſuch admirable proof of his Love, in ſending his *Son*, and his *Spirit* after you, to work ſo great and glorious a change in you, coming in the ſtill voice and *whiſpering* Love unto you, *dandling* you as on the *knee*, welcoming you again and again to the Throne of Grace, oft filling your empty *Bottles*, answering your thouſand *Doubts*, ſealing the Covenant of Grace and granting and confirming to you the *Patents* of Love : And yet at every turn have you doubted, whether God love you or no ? God chides *Zion*, for this, *Let not Zion ſay, the Lord hath forſaken, &c.*

Isa. 49. 14.

Concluding God no Friend because Satan is an Enemy and doth tempt them.

5. Are there not ſome good Souls (though their goodneſſ lies not in this) that are apt to *queſtion* the Love of God to them, from the *blaſphemous thoughts* and *injections* that they are *barrazed* with ? But what, becauſe Satan is your *Adverſary*, muſt God therefore not be your *Friend* ? Becauſe Satan doth tempt you will it therefore follow, that God doth not love you ? Were we not wonderfully prone to evil ſuſmiſes and diſtruſts of God, we would not make Satans Malice a ground ſufficient to doubt of the Love of God. Doth the Husband love his Wife the leſs, for that ſhe is tempted, whileſt ſhe deſies the Tempter and is burthened with his foul and daring ſolicitations ?

O how is Satan gratified hereby? He is the great Accuser, the great Tale-bearer, that separateth choise Friends: He goeth betwixt God and Saints, as a Mediatour of Differences, to accuse Saints to God, and God to Saints, and will you any longer be Tale-bearers against God? Believe it, the false witness which he brings, is against him, who hath given you wonderful proofs of his everlasting Love towards you. When, O! when will you complain of Satan, in the words of the Psalmist? *The Enemy hath persecuted my Soul, he hath made me to dwell in darkness, like those that have been long dead.* It is the Enemy that veils and obscures the work of the Spirit what he can, that you shall see it no more than a dead man can behold any company that is in the Room, Vault or Grave with him. When Satan tells you, your Graces are counterfoit, your Faith but that which a temporary may have, your Graces but moral Vertues; O! how soon is your Enemy credited? how much more believed than God, his Ministers, and all the testimonies of Gods Love that are brought you? Hence you are one day jealous of the Kindness of Christ, another day of the Fulness of Christ, then of the Intentions of Christ, he means no good to me: Hence also you doubt of the acceptance of your Persons and Duties; *There is a Cloud hangs over my Prayers, that they cannot pass up:* If I come to Christ, he will not look on such a Wretch as I am. Many such hard thoughts of Christ are suggested by Satan, and too soon entertained

Confessions
against evil
surmises of
God.

Psalm 143.3.

tained by us : *Whilest so, you can never
 God for any Mercy ; for you doubt whether
 be a Mercy to you. " Can you bless him
 " life, health, and length of dayes, wh
 " you have this Suggestion, that your acc
 " swells with your time ; Can you bless
 " for Estates, Honours, Friends, &c.
 " you have this jealousy, that God is fat
 " you as Hoggs for the slaughter ? Can
 " bless God for Ordinances, whilest you
 " that there is a Commission given forth
 " though you have eyes, yet you shall not see
 " And that the Sun is to harden you, wh
 " softneth others ? Yea, how can ye bless
 " for Christ, when you imagine he is set fo
 " fall ?*

By giving way to these Jealousies,
 dam up the Springs of Praise, that
 flow from your lips day and night.
 you will also be hindred from waiting
 Lord, with that free and chearful Spirit
 ought. I cannot wait on an Enemy, as
 Friend. If I have cursed jealousies
 man, I find no pleasure to be in his comp
 and if he employs me about any thing,
 grudgingly about it. The truth is,
 " long as you entertain suspicions of
 " willingness to make you happy, and
 " ford you sufficient means to make you
 " py, all your Religion will degenerate
 " a spurious and base-born Devotion.
 " stead of that free and friendly convers
 " ought to be maintained between God
 " your Souls, you will only flatter him

Patrick's
 Parable of
 the Pil-
 grim.
 P. 27, 28.

servile manner, and bribe him not to be your Enemy. Worship God you must; for fear of incurring his displeasure, and lest your neglects of him should rouse up his anger against you; but you cannot entertain any chearful and friendly society with a Being which appears in a dress so horrible to your Souls. Now between this necessity of coming to him, and that fearfulness to approach him, what can there be begotten, but a forced and constrained Devotion, which, because you do not love, you would willingly leave, did not the dread and horror you have in your Souls of him, dragg you to his Altars? And what are you wont to do there? Truly nothing but cry, and look as if you were going to Execution, till you can flatter your selves into some hopes, that he is moved by your cries, and forced submissions, to lay aside his frowns, and cast a better aspect upon you: But your hard thoughts of God returning, you are constrained to renew your slavish Devotions, that you may purchase another gracious look from him. In this circle do your poor Souls spend many dayes, and advance not one step towards the *New Jerusalem*. No wonder therefore God be so provoked at this sin of evil sur-
ses. This is what I have observed very common among the Lords People, they will say with some earnestness, and perhaps have some confidences that God is gracious, and will answer their prayers, and grant all
G their

their desires; but no sooner off from their knees, (but if they think of God, yet) they lay down their expectations of receiving anything from God, and fall to distrusting and renew their jealousies of God as soon as they have done Praying. What? Is God *yea* or *no*? Is he kind, when thou art on thy knees, and unkind as soon as off? Will God tell thee well from thee, that in thy duties thou hast put to thy Seal that God is true, and loves and minds thy good? And presently take off the Seal, yea, rather Seal to a parchment the Devils drawing; that God is false, deceitful, lish, and one that seeks thy ruine? O! where there is a Devil, and a melancholy humour be wrought upon, I do even despair of this cursed God-dishonouring and debasing sin, to be quite rooted out of the hearts of Christians; but yet it is a Provocation, *Let it be for a Lamentation.*



CHAP. XII.

Their unthankfulness.

Professors
unthank-
fulness.

5ly. **U**nthankfulness is another piece of ungodliness that Professors are very guilty of. Praise, or Thankfulness is as the Penny bought

per: corn, which God expects as acknowledge-
ment, as *high Rent*, to be paid him for all we
hold of him. But how hath this been denyed?
And thereby how justly have we forfeited all
into the hands of God? Though the paying
of this *rent-penny* be the only *Heavenly* work
that can be done on *Earth*; the only *joyful* em-
ployment, that shall last to all *Eternity* in ano-
ther life; a work that should ever wait for God in
Zion, and therefore *Zion* is called *Israel my glo-*
ry; not only because God glorieth in *Zion*, but
because *Zion* should continually glorific God:
yet how unthankful are the most Professors?
The very Heathens will rise up in judgement
against unthankful Christians; They had
their hymns to their Gods. *Plato* when rea-
dy to die, gave God thanks for three things,
that he was made a man, that he was born in
Greece, and that he lived in the time of *Socra-*
tes. How much more should our lips shew
worth the high praises of God, who hath made
us not only men, but new men? That we are
born of God, adopted the Children of the
most High, and regenerated by the Spirit?
That we have breathed not in Greece, but in
England, in *Ariel*, a place of Visions, in the
Valley of Vision? O the riches of free grace!
That our Mothers Conceived with us in this
place of light, and at such a time when the
nation was most enriched with the light of
the Gospel, when it was full of gracious Mi-
nisters, the best that ever the world saw since
the Apostles dayes! Why had not God
brought thee out of the Womb when this

Psal. 65.

ult.

Isa. 46. ult.

land was overrun with *Paganism*? with *P*
pery? Why had not the Lord shut thee
 and imprisoned thee with the rest of the
 World in *darkness*, and in the *shadows*
death. O that when the Gospel shines
 upon a little *spot* of ground, which God has
 inclosed for himself, and stiles it his *pleas*
place, his *garden*, that thou shouldst be
 man *born there*! That when the rest of
 world is like the *barren mountains*, on which
no rain falls, and brings forth nothing but
 bryars, that God should bring thee forth
 the place of his *Tabernacle*! And yet thou
 grateful wretch will hardly confess, that
 lines are *fallen happily*, and that thou hast
 goodly *beritage*. How seldom is such
 guage as this heard from thee? "Blessed
 "the Lord that my *lot is fallen in so fair*
 "ground: blessed be God that I was born
 "England, and not in the *Watts of Arabia*
 "or *America*; thanks be to the Lord, that
 "have had more than the light of the *Sun*
 "Moon, and Stars to conduct me to *Jesus*
 "that so many *wells of Salvation* have
 "opened unto me, which have been shut
 "the most of the World. But to return
 Plato: If he thanked God for living in
 dayes of *Socrates*, we may say, that greater
 than *Socrates* have been amongst us. We
 had those, with whom we have taken
 counsel, with whom together we have gone
 the house of God, who have been burning
 well as *shining lights*; many examples of
 walking heavenly Christians have we enjoyed

Such as have had *the wisdom from above*, and more pure learning, than ever *Socrates* or *Plato* could pretend to. The Society of how many heavenly, grave, serious, active, fruitful Christians have we been blest with, such as have been faithful admonishers, such as would not *suffer sin to rest upon us*, such as have daily told us, *here is the way, walk therein*? O the helps we have had! But O the cursed unthankfulness of our hearts towards God, notwithstanding his bestowing upon us so many *lights to guide us*, so many *fires to warm us*, and so much *salt to season us*!

1. *Instead of giving God the glory of all, O how have we sacrificed to our own nets, and to other Instruments?* We have praised *our selves*, rather than *God* for what we have. We have not ascribed the glory to God, but to Instruments: like that *Cardinal*, who writ down how much such a *Prince* honoured him, what such a *Lord* did for him, and what such a *Pope* conferred on him; whereupon another infers, *This man remembered his Friends*, but forgot *God*. *Saul* hath slain his thousands, and *David* his ten thousands; but *God* hath little or no share in the Triumph.

Evidenced in their Sacrificing to Instruments.
Hab. i. 16.

2. *How sensible are we of our wants and straits?* But O how unaffected with the goodness of *God* towards us? *How full of complaints are we?* but empty of acknowledgements? Hath not the want of some one thing robbed us of the comfort of all our enjoyments, and *God* of the praise that was due to his name? We have been (such is our way-

Too much complaining.

ward Nature.) more troubled for the want of some one thing, than thankful for many mercies: Like Haman, one Mordecai not bowing to our desires, hath made us heavy and senseless under all our honours, and God's vouchsafements: Like Achab, we have been more dejected for want of Naboth's Vineyard, than we have blessed God for a Kingdom.

Being most
in the Pe-
titionary
part of
Prayer.

3. Are not we oftner, longest and heartier in the Petitionary part of Prayer? We are craving the supply of wants; but seldom, very seldom, too too seldom blessing God for what we are stored with: Our Petitions are long, but Praises are short; To what be praise, honour and glory, serves for a sufficient Doxology: Yea, how earnest, how urgent, how importunate are we in the Petitionary part; but how dull and heartless are we in the Gratulatory part of Prayer?

Setting up
their rest
in gladness.

4. Do not we set up our rest in being glad of Mercies and Deliverances? Whereas it is nothing to be glad of a Mercy or Deliverance, but another thing to be thankful for it. Are they glad: I but that will not serve to turn; it is a return of an higher nature, which God looks for: O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness!

Psal. 107.
30, 31.

Forgetting
Mercies.
Isa. 17. 10.

5. Are not we unmindful of the good dealings of God with us? Have not we forgotten the God of our Salvations, and been unmindful of the Rock of our strength? "an unthankful man (saith Seneca) that receives a Benefit received, so is he that receives a Blessing received, so is he that receives a Mercy received."

“seemles it, together with him that requites
“it not : but of all the rest, he is most un-
“thankful, that hath forgotten it.

6. Have not we neglected to make Catalogues
of the Mercies we have received, to help our
memories ? How can we, that have not, and
will not submit to this Divine Ordinance, look
upon our selves as some of Gods Israel ! This
God hath ordained for a Law, and a Statute
for Israel : What was this Ordinance ? That
they should write it (what God had done for
them) and so provide, that the Generations
to come might know what God had done.
But alas ! how little care have we, that what-
soever God does, may be for ever to his glory ?
How unjust are we unto our Children, and
the Generations to come, in depriving them of
a faithful Record of Gods Mercies to us, in
which God speaks to them, as well as unto
us ? What God spake to Jacob at Bethel, he
spake to Israel, that lived in Hisea's time,
above a thousand years after it : There he spoke
with us. How injurious to them ? By such a
faithful Record, they might read the right way
in sailing Heaven-ward ; by our Falls, they
might know where lye the Rocks and Quick-
sands, and by our Deliverances, where Out-
gates are to be found.

7. Have not we been too silent concerning the
Goodness of God towards us ? How seldom do
we with David say, Come and hear all ye that
fear God, and I will declare what he hath done
for my Soule. How unlike Saints are we ?
Thy Saints shall bless thee, they shall speak of
the

Not mak-
ing Cata-
logues of
Mercies.

Psal. 78.5.

Deut. 4.9.

6. 7.

31. 19.

Eccles. 3.

14.

Hos. 12.3.

Not speak-
ing of
Gods Mer-
cies unto
others.

Psa. 66. 16.

Psal. 145.

10, 11, 12.

Isa. 63. 7.

Not stir-
ring up
others to
joyn with
them in
praising
God.

Their Un-
thankful-
ness.

For Con-
version.

Act. 22. 6, 7.

2 Tim. 1.
13.

the glory of thy Kingdom, and talk of thy power, to make known to the sons of men thy mighty acts. I will mention the loving Kindnesses of the Lord, and the Praises of the Lord, according to all that he hath bestowed on me, &c. So will I praise thee, O Lord, in the midst of thy holy Zion.

8. Have not we neglected to call on others to joyn with us in the blessing of God! When we make a Collection of Praises from our Friends, that would gladly have been in the Quire? A thankful heart is filled with enlarged desires, that others, that all, would joyn in the work of Praising God. A grateful heart doth not think it enough to praise God alone; though it would be praising God, if there were none in Heaven or Earth to bear it company.

But I shall speak more particularly, and in substance in some of those choice personal Mercies (to wave national ones) for which the best of us are too too unthankful.

How have we forgot the bole, and deep mire, and miry clay, out of which we were digged. Have not we been unmindful of the blessed Jubilee, when the Prisoners were let out of the Prison-house? Paul remembreth the Circumstances of his Conversion, the Time wherein, in a journey night to Damascus: Time when, about Noon; the Manner how suddenly there did shine from Heaven a great Light round about me, and I fell to the ground and heard a voice, &c. He remembreth what he was before Conversion: I was a persecutor, a Blasphemer, and injurious. What

faith God? Remember this day: What day? The day wherein you were delivered from the house of bondage under Sin, the World, and Satan, O! how have we forgotten, that the Lord, by a strong and irresistible work of his blessed Spirit: translated us out of the Kingdom of Satan, into the Kingdom of his dear Son? It was he that made Jordan to give back, and delivered us from Egypt, and the Wilderness, that we might inherit the good Land. O! what Enemies were we, studying to be damned, galloping to Hell, till God met us?

How seldom do we look back to the Spring For Election.

from whence all our Mercy flows? How unthankful have we been for that Original-fountain-Mercy, eternal Election? Why should God single us out a People for himself? Why did grace blossom from Eternity? Why did God plot and study my happiness before I had a being? What was there, that Jacob is smiled upon, and Esau not so? God might have had his Revenues of glory out of my ruine. O that he should glorifie the riches of his mercy in my Salvation! And yet how little is God magnified for this?

How little do we bless God for Christ? For Christ.
Though he be the Stream that alone refresheth the City of God, yet how seldom is his Love, his stoops and condescensions for us, his bleeding and dying for us, remembered by us, with hearty Praises and Thanksgivings?

How little do we bless God for the Covenant For the Covenant of Grace, and The the Spirit,
of Grace, which Mr. Allen excellently calls,

Ezek. 36.
27.

For out-
ward Sal-
vations.

*The Bow in the Cloud, after a Deluge of Sin
Misery, the forfeited Lease of Eternity renewed
Magna Charta of the City of God, the Hope of
Sinners, and the Riches of Saints? And in par-
ticular, for the Promise of the Spirit, in all
Offices and Operations, for the application of
the purchased Possession? I will put my Spirit
within you.*

*How little do we remember to bless the Lord
for outward Salvations? You began peo-
ple with a little, as Jacob, and now behold
have two bands, a troop of Children,
Friends, &c. and an Estate to maintain
them. When others have had one Mess,
have had Benjamin's Portion, the silver
put into the sacks month; Riches, and God's
Estate, and Christ too; Peace, and the
of Peace too; the World, and a good Title
it; and yet do not you seldom cry
Bless the Lord, O my Soul! and let all that is within
in thee praise his holy Name? How seldom
you consider who hath maintained you all
while? Who hath delivered you, and put
you as brands out of the fire? You have
the Sentence of Death in yourselves; you have
been, with David and Paul, in the mouth
the Lyon, and yet saved; near to perish
the Bullet, Sword, Pestilence, Feaver, and
other dangers, and yet your Lives given
for a prey: But how soon have you forgotten
wonders shewen unto the dead? O the many
venting Mercies that you have been made par-
takers of! Hath not God secured you in
travails? How many have died much young*

Sin man you, whilst the Lord lengtheth out
 our dayes in order to Repentance? How
 many have died in an instant, and been
 snatch'd away, without any warning given of
 Death's approach; whilst you have had ma-
 ny an Harbinger, to give you to understand
 its nearness to you? How many have been
 crushed by falls from houses, and devoured
 by beasts, and by other accidents have been
 hastened to their long home; whilst God is
 long-suffering to you? How many have you
 seen drawn on Sleds, led to shameful and vio-
 lent Deaths, whilst you have been kept from
 such dismal ends? And are there no thanks
 due to the Name of God? And yet *how sel-*
dom do you admire at distinguishing Providence,
 and preventing loving kindnesses? You have a
 guard of Angels to attend you day and night,
 to secure you from danger; but *how little* do
 you bless the Lord for the Heavenly Host? And
 yet, if you do thank God for some signal out-
 ward Mercies, perhaps for ease from the Stone,
 Gout, Cholic; perhaps for security from the
 rage of the devouring Pestilence: if you thank
 not God *more* for deliverance from Hell, from
 the guilt and power of Sin, than for outward
 Salvations, you discredit God, and his choicest
 Mercies, by under-rating Spirituals to Tem-
 porals.

We should have blessed God for his *Rod*,
 as well as for his *Staffe*, for both are *Mercies*;
 but *how unthankful* are we even for sufferings
 for righteousness sake? God expects, that in
 everything we give thanks; as we should not
 be

For suf-
 ferings
 for Christ.

be partial in our Obedience, so neither in *Thanksgiving*. How little have we imitated the ancient Christians, whose mouths were alwayes full of *Thanks be unto God*? They luted one another with *Deo gratias*; and when they heard tydings of *Persecution* or *Prison*, of *Crosses* or *Comforts*, still they cried out, *God be thanked*. How unlike are we to the famous *Bradford*? *If (said he) the Lord will release me, I will thank her; if she will keep me in Prison, I will thank her; if she will burn me, I will thank her.* Thou shouldst say from thy very heart, "Though sick, though scorned, though threatned, though all day long counted as a sheep for the slaughter, yet blessed be God that I am counted worthy to suffer for his Name: Blessed be God that he counts me for a Son, and chastens me for my profit, that I may be made partaker of his holiness: Blessed be God, that I am chastened, that I may not be condemned." But how few give thanks alwayes in all things unto God? We have been too backward to glorifie God in *Zion*, much more in the *Temple*. The Apostle *Peter* would not have any Christian suffering as a Christian, to be ashamed; but to glorifie God on this behalf, and to rejoyce, as much as he is partaker of *Christs* sufferings. But God knows how far from Praises we have been, when the Storms have been high, and threatned our *Tabernacles*.

Eph. 5. 20.
Isa. 24. 15.
1 Pet. 4.
16, 13.

Considerations
against
Unthank-
fulness.

How hath God charged us to remember his mercy, and to praise him for it? Ye that fear the Lord, praise him: Praise him, O ye Servants,

Praise the Lord ! Praise thy God, O Zion ! Praise Psal. 22. 23.
him in the heights : Praise God in his Sanctua- 135. 1.
ry : Praise him for his mighty acts : Praise 147. 12.
him according to his excellent greatness. Doth 148. 1.
not the innumerableneſſ of Gods requiries of 150. 1, 2.
Praise and thanksgiving, aggravate our neg-
lect of this Duty ? What provision hath Chriſt
made againſt this Sin ? Hath not he appoint-
ed the Sacrament of his Supper, on purpoſe
to help us to Remember him, and his ſaving
benefits ? Do this in Remembrance of me. But
have not many Profeſſours been ſo reſolved
to be unthankful, that they have neglected
this great Ordinance, which was appointed
to ſtrengthen their Remembrance of paſt Mer-
cies ? Hath not God told us, that he hath form-
ed us for his praiſe ? And what, yet back-
ward thereunto ? We can never love God to an
height, whileſt we forget his loving Kindneſſes.
I wonder not, that many complain of their
decays of Love to God, whileſt they forget
his wonders of Grace and Love to their Souls.
Even Publicans will love thoſe of whom they are
beloved. And did we oftner recount the
Mercies of God, they would work endear-
ments betwixt God and our Souls : Did we
conſider, what a wonder it is, that God
ſhould draw us out of nothing ; that he, who
ſtroops to behold the things of Heaven, ſhould
put his finger to our workmanſhip ; that he
ſhould curiouſly work us, as Needle-work,
in the dark Vaults of Nature ; and that when
we were fuller of ſin, than the Toad of poy-
ſon, that yet he ſhould feed a Toad, and
cloath

Psal. 78. 42.

Matth. 16.
8, 9. 10.

cloath a Cockatrice : the Fire of Love
 God would burn within our breasts. *Has
 God provoked by this sin ?* God took it ill at
 hands of the *Israelites*, that they remember
 not his hand, nor the day in which he deliv-
 ered them : How much more do we grieve
 Lord, who remember not the goodness
 salvation of the Lord in *Canaan*, yet
 Zion ? Our Saviour was grieved, that his
 principles remembered not the five Loaves, and
 seven Loaves, and how many Baskets they
 up ; Innumerable greater favours hath
 shewed to us, and yet we forget them. *But
 have we forgot the God that bridled Nature
 proud waves, and said, Hitherto ye shall
 and no farther ?* When we were ripe
 Judgement, then Mercy stepped in, and
 how slow to give thanks ? Hardly one of
 blesteth God for cleansing Mercy, as
 ought. *Were there not ten cleansed, but
 are the nine ?* This makes me fear, *Per-
 have not had a deep sense of the misery
 stains of Nature, for that their Saviour is
 more thanked.* "Did not the Lord find
 thee, by an over-powering work of grace
 upon thy Soul at first Conversion, to
 willing to be made happy ? Did not he
 pel thee to come into the Feast ? Was it
 God that brought thee to such a Parish,
 such a Minister, and to such a Text ?
 did not he, by his Almighty power,
 able thee to believe and apply ? Was it
 he, that broke thine heart, when as
 as a neathermost Mill-stone, and made it

" malleable

malleable and pliant to his will and pleasure? And what, forget the wonders of the Lord in the deep? This vexeth the Lord to the heart. Did not he cause the Walls of Jerico to fall, as by the voice of Ramshornes, by weak inconsiderable means? Did not he alienate thine heart from Lusts, that were dearer to thee than thine eyes? Did not he present the face of Christ, as lovely to thy Soul, who before was despised and rejected? And hath not Christ fed thee with fresh supplies of free grace, that have watered thy Soul every moment, so that you have been kept through his mighty power? How many doubts hath Christ answered; and how many scruples hath he, by his Holy Spirit, satisfied thee in? And yet, O wretched heart! how unthankfull hast thou been? Thou hast forgot all his benefits. A man would think it were impossible, that every displeasing Providence should make us so forgetful of all the mighty Works, that have been done within doors upon our Souls. How just is it with God to plague us; for this our unkindness unto him? Because thou hast forgotten, &c. therefore the harvest shall be an heap. In the beginning all succeeded well, (saith *Varabius* upon the place) according to our desire: In the day the Plant grew, and in the morning the Seed flourished; but because of unthankfulness, extreame misery followed. Wonder not, that the Showres are withheld, that the Lord causeth the Sun to set on the Prophets at Noon day, that the *Manna* falls not

Psal. 17.
 10, 11.

*Ingrato
quod dona-
tur, deper-
ditur. Sen.*

not before your doors, that the *bidden Man* and *white Stone*, are denied you, you have been unthankful, you have not taken care for the *fruits*, that nothing be lost. Gods Mercies have been lost upon you. Our *Waters* were become *Wines*, our *Gleanings* were better than the *Worlds Vintage* : God dealt with us as *So*. But now, if he draws in his hand, and makes *Garden* as a *desolate Wilderness* for this sin, we can say unto God, *What doſt thou ?* Must all of us put our mouths in the dust ? Did we sit under our own *Vines* ? Had we not *solemn Assemblies* ? Did not we go in *troops* into the *house of the Lord* ? Was not *Holiness* in our *edit* ? Did not the mix'd multitude joyn with us, and desired to be *numbred amongst us*, because *God was with us* ? Did not *fear* come upon all the *People* ? And had not the *Churches* rejoiced ? Did we fear the shaking of the *Spear* ? Might we not have been as *holy* as we pleased ? Had we not as much *liberty* as we desired ? But then how unthankful were we ? How troubled were we, that every *Mordecai* did not bow ; that every one would not be of our mind, and dance after our pipe ? God knows what a *Controversie* there is with the *Land*, for the unthankfulness of them that dwell therein. how glad would ye be of one of the *dayes* of your *Son of man* ; of your old *Priviledges*, and *Spiritual Liberties* ? Because ye have not served God with joy and praise in *dayes of plenty*, therefore is but a *righteous thing*, that you serve in *scarcity and famine of Bread* : of the *Word of the Lord*.

CHAP. XIII.

Their neglect of Prayer, especially of secret Prayer.

Neglect of Prayer is another part of Ungodliness, too common even among Professors. Request and Thanksgiving are (saith one) like the double motion of the Lungs, by which they suck in, and breath out the air again. In the Petitionary part of Prayer, we desire either the bestowing of some good thing, or the preventing or removing of some evil from our selves, or the inflicting of some evil on Gods implacable Enemies: And in the Gratulatory part of Prayer, we return the praise of glory, of what we have received from God; unto God. Though the Thanksgiving part of Prayer be most, yet the petitionary part of Prayer is too much neglected. It is Ungodliness to go about any Business, or Journey, to fix our Abode, to use any Creature, Food, or Physick, without asking Gods leave and blessing in Prayer: Yea, it is a branch of Atheism; this Brat of irreligion is laid at the door of Atheism by the Psalmist. Is it not a Lamentation, and

Professors neglect of Prayer.

Psal. 14:
1, 3, 4.

H

should

should it not be for a Lamentation, that many Professors should be guilty of such ungodliness?

Never
Praying.

Isa. 41. 21.
23.

Zeph. 3. 2.

Matth. 26.
41.

Jer. 10. 21.

Zeph. 1. 6.

Confide-
rations
against
this sin.

Psal. 10. 4.

Job. 1. 15.

Are there not many, who never prayed in their lives? Professors are looked upon by the world as Praying people; but O! how the world mistaken in many of them? They have not called upon me, O Jacob! Though Jacob was a People severed into a Church State, with an aim at Gods praise, yet Jacob prayed not: This was grievous unto God. Do not many Professors clearly evidence, that they are prayerless Souls, by their disobedience to the Preceptive, their impatience under the Providential Will of God? By their distrust of the All-sufficiency and Faithfulness of God? She obeyed not the voice: She received not correction: She trusted not in the Lord: She drew not near to her God. By their entering into so many Temptations? Watch and Pray lest ye enter into Temptation. By their being deceived, and labouring to deceive others in the things of God? The Pastors are become brutish, and have not sought the Lord. By their Backslidings, and Apostasies? And those that are turned back from the Lord, and those that have not sought the Lord.

Doth not this sin speak out high contempt to God? That God is not entertained, so much as in a thought? He will not seek God: God is not in all his thoughts. That the thoughts of God are blasphemous? What profit should we have, if we pray unto him? Yea, Doth not this sin speak out the hearts denial of God?

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What saith the Psalmist? *The Fool hath said in his heart, there is no God: he calls not upon God.* To live without Prayer, is to be dead while alive; for it is to live without God. The Families that know not God, and that call not on his Name, are the same. What? Will ye not do so much as pray unto God? What can you do less for God, than by this homage, to own him for your Maker? Or less for your own Souls, than to beg their lives of him, whose hand of Justice is lift up against them? *Their Souls (and theirs only) shall live, that seek the Lord.* No Malefactors dye more unlamented, than those, that when cast, will not beg for their lives.

Psal. 53.
1, 4.

Jer. 10. 25.

Psal. 69. 32.

How many also are there, that have cast off Prayer? How many have restrained Prayer? And that both when they have thought they have prayed themselves out of affliction, they have had no more to say to God, till under affliction again: and when they have for some time prayed for deliverance to no purpose. *This evil is of the Lord, why should I wait any longer?* This is worse, than not to pray at all. Not to pray at all, notes only the neglect of duty; but to cast off Prayer, a distaste of duty. But I shall be more particular.

Restrain-
ing Prayer.

Job 15. 4.

Though Prayer be the only Key, to unlock the Store-houses and Treasuries of all Blessings: yet how little hath this Key been used? I shall wave publick and private, and only instance in secret Prayer, and that both sudden, and composed, and solemn. How few Professors have made conscience of Ejaculatory Prayer?

Neglect-
ing Ejacu-
latory
Prayer.

Prayer ? How seldom have we darted our souls to Heaven, upon sudden emergent occasions, in some short desires ? As when we are hearing, *Lord, set home this Word upon my heart*, When in Prayer our hearts are melting, &c. *Lord, suffer not my heart to grow more to be barded from thy fear* : When we are about our worldly employments, *Lord, keep my heart with thy self, &c.* Are not some of us wholly unacquainted with the kind of Praying ? Not such a Dart (like one) to be found in all their Quiver. They know not how, in the midst of their worldly businesses, and company, yea, in the midst of their solemn religious duties, in hearing, reading, conferring, praying, &c. to let their thoughts to give God a visit, though but a short one, in a desire or two, to speak at least one or two heart-words unto him. Have not most Professors too much contented themselves with their solemn Visits of God, but between their solemn Duties have scarcely ever conversed with God ? What account shall we be able to give of our thoughts (the first-born of our Souls) from morning to evening ? Is not this the highest improvement of them, to send them in embassies unto Heaven, and by them to converse with God ? Do not the best of us find strangeness apt to grow between God and our Souls, between our set Duties ? And may we not impute this strangeness to our omission of these more transient and occasional talkings with God ? How many precious things, in Christian con-

serence

ference, in Sermons, in our solemn joynt Prayers, are lost, for want of present listing up our hearts to God, for his presence therein, and blessing thereupon? How many blessed motions of the Holy Spirit, suggested to us in our particular Callings, are quenched, for want of these short sallies of our souls to Heaven, for more grace, that these sparks may be kept alive, yea, blown into a flame? Neglect of this kind of Prayer is no small provocation: it grieves God: there is much unkindness in it, that God should be so gracious, as to let his door stand wide open at all times, and that he should assure us of welcome, when ever we come to him, and yet that we should not be so kind, as to step in to visit him, with a desire, hour after hour; and that, though we may thus visit him, and not neglect (but rather further) any business we have in hand, and without being uncivil to any company in which we are, He cannot but take this unkindly.

How few Professors have made conscience of closet-Prayer? Though Christ takes it for granted, that his Disciples will thus pray, and hath annexed a sweet promise to the due performance of this duty, When thou prayest, enter into thy Closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father, which is in secret, and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly: Retire thy self, get thee a place, set thy self a time, wherein thou mayest vacare Deo, be at leisure to make it thy business to pray to God, &c. Yet how

Neglect-
ing closet-
Prayer.

Mat. 6. 6.

is this duty wholly omitted by some, and too seldom performed by others? Satan prevails with some (otherwise honest souls) to put off this duty from time to time, by telling them, either that they will but play hypocrites therein; or that the time is not convenient, by reason either of some bodily or of some soul distempers; or that this and the other worldly business must of necessity be dispatch'd at such a time, &c. O how little do such love the Lord, that are afraid to pray too secretly, or too often in secret with him. But alas! how many omit closet-Prayer altogether? Some content themselves with praying with others, either in the Church or in the Family: How can such look upon themselves as Saints, whatever Profession they make? What? a Saint, and yet not desire any privacy between God and his Soul? a Saint, and yet find no errand to invite thee to speak with God alone? Sure thou rather seekest to approve thy self to man than to God. Thou mayest for a time be the worlds Saint, but God will at last unmask thee, and present thee before the eyes of the world for an *Hypocrite*. The true Lord delights to visit his Friends when he may be alone: like that good man, who, when the set time for his closet-Prayer was come, would break from any company he was in with this handsome speech, *I have a Friend that stays for me, Farewell*. Others put off this duty, by pretending they pray always; every hour they are darting up Ejaculations

Mat. 6. 5, 6.

to Heaven. As the pretence of every day-Sabbath (saith one) comes just to no Sabbath; so the continual Praying of some carnal Professors, is not Praying at all. Ejaculatory Prayer should not hinder, but rather fit for, solemn set Praying. Fire must be kept upon the Altar continually, but that must not hinder the Morning and Evening Sacrifice. True Christians cannot be satisfied with a bit and away, but they must have their set meals. Others look at Closet-Prayer to be at the best but a Free-will Offering (as they term it) which they may offer, if they will, but will not own it a duty: Surely such are little sensible of their *heart-plagues*, or else they would alone, *one by one*, make Prayers and Supplications. Such either have not the Spirit at all, or else but little, very little of the Spirit, or else they would be Praying apart. In all my observation, the ruines of Christians have begun in their Closet neglects, either by omitting the duty totally, or by careless, formal, customary management of it. "The truth is (saith a late neat Writer) this is the first step towards Apostacy: Back-sliders grow first out of acquaintance with God in secret, then delight in this duty declineth by little and little, then are they less frequent in their visits, upon which followeth a casting off the duty, and yet they may appear great sticklers and zealots in publick Ordinances; but if they recover not what they have lost in their secret Trade, they will ere long break here also.

1 Kings 8.
38, 39.
Zech. 12.
10, 11.

No surer sign of an Hypocrite, than when
 neglect secret Prayer, it turns thee into
 Nebuchadnezzar, into an Heathen; nay,
 Jer. 10. 21. to a Nebuchadnezzar, a Beast, They are
 come brutish, and have not sought the Lord.
 Thou pretendest a love to God, didst thou
 love him, thou wouldst love to be with him
 yea, lovers covet to be alone, where they
 may more freely impart their mutual affec-
 tions: perhaps in thy family, Religious com-
 munion of God by Prayer is (yet) kept up,
 keep up thy credit with men, that thou mayest
 not be thought an Atheist, that thou mayest
 be trusted; an hundred things may keep thee
 and hold thee to publick duties, but here is
 the tryal of thy uprightness, what thou doest
 in secret for God, and with him: when the
 Masters part (the two great ones, God and
 World) then is the tryal of thee, whose
 want thou art; but oh! when the Master
 alone, then he is mostly neglected.

When alone thou art fittest for this duty
 calling upon God; when the World is
 out, then thou hast a discharge from the cur-
 bers of the Earth: an Heathen (Scipio) will
 tell thee; I have never better company, than
 when I have no company; for then can I
 entertain my own thoughts, and converse with
 all the learned that have been in former ages.
 But thou art called to greater honour, to
 prove thy solitude, to converse with God
 Joh. 16. 32. when alone to have thy Father with thee.

Yea, God, like a modest lover, commu-
 nicates most of his affections, to his people
 when

when they are in secret : when David was in the night watches, then his soul was filled with marrow and fatness, not that he wanted Gods presence in the day; for seven times a day he praised God, but his day-sacrifices yielded him not that marrow and sweetness, as he tasted in the night, when he was sequestered from all company and business. O! the hidden *Mannah* is the sweetest. *The Church* cleaveth on the breast of Christ in the Wilderness, and there he speaks to her heart. Unhappy Soul! innumerable are thy losses, by neglecting Christs calls, *Come my Beloved, let us goe forth into the Fields, there will I give thee my loves* : That God should so lovingly invite thee, to take a turn or two with him every day, in order to his opening his breast to thee, and yet be denied?

Psal. 63.6.

Cant.

Hof. 2. 14.

Cant. 7. 12.

Again : When alone, and not with God, thou art lyable to Satans foulest Temptations, to Atheism, Discontent, or Pride of heart : When the Devil finds the house empty, he will furnish you with company enough, seven other worse Spirits, if worse may be; you shall be employed : Fear a Rape at least, if God be not engaged to be a little Sanctuary in thy Closet and retirements : Satan frequents the high ways, and that Robber takes men aside into a corner, and then pillageth them of their treasure : He thought to to have dealt with Christ, and therefore takes him into a Mountain alone : When alone your dangers are greatest, therefore should your cries to Heaven be most vehement.

Matth. 4. 8.

Now

Not early
enough in
the Closet.
Mark 13. 33.

Mark 1. 35.

Pfal. 5. 3.
119. 147.

How few Professours have observed the fittest time for secret Prayer? God will have us, in this sense, *Watch unto Prayer*. God would have us early to tell the Lord, whose Servants we are, and that we dare not undertake any business, without first consulting God with us; that we dare not enter into Satans territories, without Christ, our Champion with us: This *Post* should be sent to Heaven in the beginning of the day; though sooner in the morning, do we begin to stir, but we need fresh succours and supplies from Heaven.

True Christians count that the sweetest breath in, which is the fruit of Prayer, and all things relish well with him, that through this golden Pipe of Prayer, therefore he is up early in his Closet, that he may receive all, this way, from the Lord's bounty, and faithfulness: Therefore he awakes sooner doth he open his eyes, but he opens his heart to God; and before he puts on his raggs, he must go to Heaven in secret Ejaculations, at least, before he goes to his Chamber to pour out his Soul more plentifully to God: He expecteth no good day, unless it be begun with a good duty: and therefore his voice shalt thou bear in the morning, in the morning will I direct my Prayer unto thee: David prevented the dawning of the morning, when he prevented God, (i. e.) his Prayers and Favours which he expected, he loved to have them in the Channel of Prayer.

But alas! how do Professours shuffle with God, by deferring and deferring? And hereby many mischiefs attend.

The World, that Pest of Souls and graces, admitted, before we have got our Antidotes against the Infection of it: Hence deadness of heart ensues, multitudes of worldly distractions; so that after a few hours, the Soul hath no mind at all to speak with God; but though it must to the Closet, yet there is it distracted with wandring thoughts, discontented thoughts, worldly thoughts; so that the time which should be spent in pure Communion with God, is taken up in driving these *Fowls from the Sacrifice.*

Besides, God is an holy God, and jealous for his Name, and he esteemeth it a reflection on him, to be so neglected, that he must be served *last of all*, and therefore withhold his influences from the Soul, to condemn such sawcy abuses of his great Name: and then no wonder if thou be soon overcome with a world of vain impertinent cogitations. By neglect of early going into your Closets, you credit the World too much, as if it were more worthy of your *time and strength*, than the Lord is: Whereas you should profess, that all your hours are Gods, and therefore you dare not, but *honour him with the first Fruits of all your increase*; you will thereby sanctifie all the Harvest, all the Vintage, by presenting God with the *green Eares.* Prov. 3. 9.

By neglect of your Mornings, you hint to other Observers, as if you were not, *First,*

to seek God, and his Kingdom, and the recompense thereof.

You neglect the fittest season, for the mercies of the night are freshest, sweetest, which after a while, like Flowers will lose their scent with us: Whilest the day is hot, it is our wisdom to strike; His mercies are renewed every Morning, so should our Praises.

By entering on business without calling on God, you declare, you need not the assistance, and that you depend not on him for every thing, but can make a shift to do without him: Whereas God feeds us from his hand to mouth, and hath not left any thing with us, that we may make our address to him night and day, who must sustain us every moment. Poor Souls, did you but consider your dangers, by reason of the three great Brigades of Enemies, the World, the Flesh, the Devil, you would not be so fool-hardy to venture abroad, untill you have beseeched God, to help poor, needy, innocent Creatures: Remember, *You wake soon as you wake*, and those things you need are such as none but a God can supply. You need Divine Power to follow your Callings.

By neglecting this season, the Devil, the World, have often made you forget to omit the Duty for the day: You have no assurance in the Morning, and what then? The Devil fills thy hand with unexpected business, that the excuse grows stronger, and more plausible.

lausable : But must we serve the Slave, and neglect the Lord of glory ?

By omitting this hour, you are the unfitter for Family-worship ; were the Instrument tuned before, it would be the fitter to play in consort.

But oh ! what hazards dost thou run, not only by preferring other things and business before God, but by neglecting the first hour of the day, when thou art not sure of a second ? Thou purpolest such an hour to pray, but what is thy Life save a *Vapour*, which may expire before that hour ?



CHAP. XIV.

The miscarriages of Praying Professours about Prayer.

ly. **T**Here is not only *Ungodliness* in not Praying, (Prayerless Souls worshipping God no more than Beasts, an Oxe, or an Ass, &c.) but in *praying amiss*. And O ! how many wayes do Professours fail in and about this Duty, both *before*, and *in*, and *after* ?

First, How do Professours fail before their Before the
entrance upon this Duty of Prayer ? Duty.

I. By

Neglecting
Meditations of God,
Psal. 5. 1.

His Holiness,

Omniscience,
Heb. 4. 13.

Omnipotence,

1 Sam.
15. 29.

Gods
goodness
and grace.

I. *By neglect of Meditation : Few can consider my Meditation. Have not we upon this Duty, before we have meditated God we were approaching to ? What an holy he is, and how unworthy we are to take Name into our mouths ? What a consuming he is, and what dry stubble we are ?*

Have not we rushed into Gods Presence the Horse rusheth into the battel ?

Have we considered, that his eyes piercing, as flames of fire ? That all things naked and open (as it were dissected) before him, with whom we have to do ? We have set God before our eyes : neither have we lied, that he is as certainly an Observer of us, as we are with our selves. Our thoughts would not be so low, so earthly, so distant did we believingly consider into whose Presence we are coming.

Have we considered Gods Almighty Power That He can do more for us, than we can or think ? He that cometh to God (in Prayer) should believe that God is, that He is Strength of Israel, that what we are to be God, Pardon of Sin, Victories over Lusts, &c. are Mercies beyond the Creatures power to reach forth to us ; but Lords arm is not shortened, that he can help.

Have we meditated on Gods bounty, and tender compassions ? As one more ready to give, than we to ask ; as one who gives liberally, and upbraids not with our offering ? We want vast thoughts of the

godness and mercy of God : we have base
egregious thoughts of God, as if we should
spas too much upon him, and weary him
coming too oft to his door.

Have we mused upon the Faithfulness of God ? His Faith-
fulness.
Who is under engagements to relieve us, to
relieve us, to be found of us, when we seek him
with our whole hearts. *And this is the confi-* 1 John
dence that we have in him, that if we ask any 5. 14.
thing according to his will, he heareth us.

Have we meditated of the Way, by whom Of the
we must come to God ? How daring are Souls Way unto
venture on an *absolute* God ? How is the God.
Way and consecrated Way neglected ? How is *Odi Deum*
Christ laid by, as if there were no need of a *absolutum.*
mediator, of an *Advocate with the Father ?* Luth.
How seldom do we pass through Golgotha,
to the heavenly *Jerusalem* ; and see, that none
can come to the Father, but by the Son ? We
need not our need of *Incense and Odours* to be Revel. 8.
mingled with our Sacrifices : little do we 3. 4.
consider, that the Opportunity of speaking
with God, is the price of blood, of the precious
blood of the Son of God.

Have we meditated of our Sins, Of their
which we are by nature and custome mostly Sins.
addicted ; and of those with which we have
once the last Duty polluted our Souls ? From
the want of Meditation hereof, ariseth forma-
lity in Duties, the heart is not humbled in
confession, neither is the Soul importunate
with the Lord for pardon and victory.

Have we made conscience to meditate upon our Of their
Wants, what Graces we mostly need, what Wants.
we

we are most defective in? From this neglect we pray as if we did not pray, without earnestness and importunity: Whereas, if we viewed our Wants of God, of his Good Spirit, Protection, Mercy, and Preservation, we should pray as for Life; and those flitting vain thoughts would hereby have been suppressed. When the Malefactor is hanging his Life at the Barr, his Soul is not running adrift after every Feather, but he makes his business, 'tis Life, and his Life that is endangered, and therefore he gathers up all possible arguments, that may induce the Judge to abate of the rigour of Justice towards him. But how oft have we been on our knees, and have been ignorant of our wants, so that we might truly say, we know not what to ask? When you go to the Markets, you consider what you and your family want: but do we so, when we go to the Spiritual Markets?

Of Mercies
received.

Have not we neglected to meditate of the Mercies of God, which we have received? Hence we come either customarily before God, or not with that holy boldness, as we should. One Mercy opens a door to another. The Valley of Achor was given as a door of mercy to Israel: Forgetting the returns of Providence makes our hearts ake, and knees faint. We should book the passages of Gods grace, how he hath remembered us in our low condition, how he hath visited us day by day; when we have been in as the parched ground, we have found God send dew to us, and springs of water have appeared.

Hos. 2.

in the wilderness : When we have come in before God with our *Shackles on our Feet*, with *Irons that have entred our Souls*, God hath made it a *Jubilee*, he hath proclaimed the *acceptable year*, he hath let us out of the *Prison-house*, and hath set our feet in a *large place* : When we have come in before God with guilt on our Souls, and with *fearful expectations*, how hath God given us the *white stone*, and sent us away with his *blessing*; and with gladness of heart? The neglect of our *Diaries* of the *Providences* and *Mercies* of God; the want of reflecting on all the *Rings* that God hath sent us, makes us more like *Slaves* than *Children*. Do we with *David* cry out, *Many*, *Pfal. 40. 5.*
O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works, which thou hast done, and thy thoughts, which are to me-ward : they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee : if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbred.

Have not we neglected to meditate on the great and wonderful things, that have been done upon the Prayers of Gods People ? We should have in everlasting remembrance, what a powerful Engine Prayer is. It hath held the bands of the Almighty : Jacob and Moses prevailed over God : It hath been a Key to open and shut the Heavens ; Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly, that it might not rain, and it rained not on the earth, by the space of three years, and six moneths ; And he prayed again, and the Heaven gave rain, and the Earth brought forth her fruit. And O what wonderful
Of the prevalence of Prayer.
Gen. 32. 28
Exod. 32. 32.
James 5. 17, 18.
I things

Jer. 33. 3.

Mat. 21. 22.

Not stir-
ring up
Grace re-
ceived.

Psal. 103.
2.

When
Praying.

things hath God promised to a Praying People ! Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not. Whatsoever ye ask in my Name, &c. Here is more than Herod offered, that was but half the Kingdom ; here is all that God will give. Whatsoever. Did we appear before God with these instances of grace, and promises fresh in our thoughts, we should not be weary. What a weariness is it ? Or that there is no rest in serving God ; and gallop through our duties as we are wont.

2. Another neglect before Prayer, is, not stirring up our Graces, before we set upon the Duty. We too much rest on habitual preparation, whereas actual is necessary. We that leap immediately from the Shop to the Throne of Grace, and labours not to quicken his dull Soul, and to leave worldly business behind him, (as Abraham his Servants, when he goeth to sacrifice) no wonder if he be not accepted of the Lord, and provoke the Lord, rather than be accepted with him. The Well is full, but that you may, nay you must, throw in a little, to fetch up more. It is thought, by the redoubling David's charge, that he found not his heart in a good frame, for the exalting of God, therefore cries out so vehemently, Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me : praise his holy Name : Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his benefits.

2ly. How have we failed, when we have entred upon the Duty ? And that in

in Confession, in Petition, and in Thanks-
giving?

1. *In our Invocations?* We call God Father, and yet how *unlike* are we unto him: we resemble not him we call Father: we reverence not him we call Father: we trust not to him with that confidence we would, to receive of our Fathers of the Flesh: we fear, when we ask Bread, he will give us a Stone: we have lower thoughts of Gods bowels, than of our own: we think our selves more pitiful, better natur'd, than God himself: If I were a Mother, and my Child in distress, I should deny him nothing.

In Invocation.

2. *In our Confessions of Sin?* We are not full, and free, and ingenuous: we fit with Rachel upon some Idols: we do not declare our wayes unto him, but rather cover our transgressions as Adam. Few can clear themselves as Job did. You will perhaps confess, *We have erred and strayed from thy wayes like lost sheep: We have left undone, &c.* but still in generals. David was in this gravelled, *When I kept silence, my bones waxed old, through my roaring all the day long.* But you descend not to particulars, or if to particulars, yet the Benjamin is reserved, loth to let Benjamin go, loth to confess envy, pride, breach of vows, want of love to Saints, loving the rich only, neglecting the poor. You will confess what every man knows you are guilty of, or what every man is addicted to; but you shame not your selves, by instancing in the particular neglects and commissions, by

Confession:
Psal. 119.
26.

Job 31:

Dolus in generalibus.
Psal. 32. 3:

which you chiefly provoke the Lord: *Agags* are not brought to execution, the *of the Cattel* are kept back, one *Wedge* is in the Tent. Or if you confess most particularly, yet it is without hatred of the sins confessed: You confess sin, yet hugg it, bosome it, plead for it, within one quarter of an hour: You confess sin, but without self-horrence: you lothe it not, as the *Plague* your hearts. I abhor my self, saith *Job*: This implies a dislike, an hatred, an indignation against, an utter alienation from, and an opposition against sin. God knows how little this is mixed with the Confessions of many Professors.

1 Kings 8.
38.
Job 42. 6.

Petition,
as to the
Matter,

3. In their Petitions? Both Matter, and Manner, and End? Have not we been failed in the Matter? Have they been always the best things? Life, Liberty, Estate, &c. desired; but Grace, Victory over Passions, Worldliness, &c. lye unsought for. We fail also, when we pray simply that we may not suffer; for there is no foundation for the Promise for such a Prayer, and we do not pray, save for what God hath promised.

Manner,

Have not we fail'd in the Manner? Have we alwayes pray'd with Earnestness, Humility, Faith, Sincerity, &c. Hath the word of God been employed? Few can say, as *David*, But I Prayer. He was all Prayer: *David*, or in *David*, was herein employed. Few can say, *With my whole heart* intreated thy favour. Alas! few pray effectually.

Psal. 109. 4.

119. 58.

ally. The heart and soul is not at work in the Duty. It is the effectual fervent Prayer that avails. We pray as if we had a mind God should deny us. We are too much like Children, scribbling over a piece of Paper, which when they have done, lay it aside, or break it, or think no more of it. We have not continued in Prayer: we have not back'd our Prayers with Prayers, re-inforced them: we have soon fainted: we have not been the right seed of Jacob, *I will not let thee go, until thou bless me*: we soon faint, and our desires expire.

*Qui frigid
rogat, docet
negare.*

Col. 4. 2.

Have not we fail'd in the End? May I not say as the Apostle James, *Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that you may consume it upon your Lusts*. Hath not our level been too low? We should have made Gods Glory our End, and we have made Self, to quiet Conscience, to obtain pardon of sin, rather than purity of heart and life: *They assemble for Corn and Wine*. You have been perhaps earnest for the pardon of your own and Englands sins, and yet selfish in all: You fear (and well you may) temporal Plagues, you are afraid that Sodom's sins may bring down fire and brimstone; and therefore, for your own sakes, rather than Gods, you pray, and with some vehemency: but your End is still too low. Never do you pray aright, till you pray more for Christs sake, than for your own: for his glory, rather than for your own present, future, temporal, or eternal advantages. It is one thing to seek our selves, and

End.

Jam. 4. 3.

Hos. 7. 14.

Isa. 58. 3.

another thing to seek God in a duty. That that pretended so highly, begin to expolate with God, *Wherefore have we fasted, and thou seest not, and takest no knowledge? Me Lusters Pray, rather than their Graces. Pride and self-love endite the Petitions: You have been suckling your lusts, whilst seemingly devout: You make provision for the flesh, whilst about spiritual work, and whilst your inward man seems to be exercised.*

Thanks-giving.

4. In our *Thanksgivings*? who is free from guilt in the gratulatory part of Prayer? Some bless God for Justification, Sanctification, Adoption, &c. and are strangers to these Priviledges, yea, if catechised know not what these mercies are, no more than Parrots know what they prattle: Others if, like the Leper, they are cleansed, yet return not to bless the Lord: They are large in *Petitions*, but very sparing in their *Praises*. Unthankful Beggers are an abomination to God and man. We should be thankful for the least mercy; though we have had the honour to be admitted into the Presence Chambers as Favourites (an honour not vouchsafed to the most of mankind) yet we are sullen, and slow to turn Praises for so great a vouchsafement. You have not come to dry breasts, you are every day full of mercy; but alas! Your prayer is not according to what you have received, therefore wrath is against you. Hast thou had no meltings in Prayer, no enlargements, no desires to fear the Lord, no importunities, no wrestlings? why yet it is mercy

2Chron. 32.

that thou livest upon the patience and bounty of God : 'Tis much, that thou shouldst have a being, and be preserved to this day : 'Tis a wonder he should feed thee, clothe thee, protect thee, strive with thee, suffer thee, who art but *dust and ashes*, to speak with him: The last night thou mightst have lain on a bed of fire, or by the hedge, or have been in the great deeps; but alas! few so ready to praise, as to pray. We are too much like the Vagabonds, when we have what we come for, away we go, and come no more till pinching necessity drives us: Yea, we too oft aggravate our miseries, and over-look the benefits we enjoy, that are mix'd with our crosses.

3ly. *How have we, when our Prayers have been ended, fail'd of our duties toward God,* After the Duty:
by running post haste from the Throne of Grace to the World, if not to our Lusts?
Not considering how our hearts were in time of duty; whether straitned, or enlarged; whether composed, or distracted; whether we had the face of God toward us, or his face veiled, whether we were lively, or lifeless; dead-hearted, or quickned; serious, or flight; what Faith was stirring, what Repentance exercised? The Church and People of God observed their hardness in duty: Why Isa. 63. 17.
hast thou hardened our hearts from thy fear? We should look back upon our Prayers, that we may be humbled for all our vain thoughts, untowardness, distractions, and unbelief in the duty: and we should do it, then, whilst

Not examining how the Duty hath been done.

we are in the highest capacity to know the miscarriages of the Soul, what the aggravating circumstances thereof are, &c. And not only in order to Humiliation, but Repentation, that for the future we may not dare to touch the Mount of Gods Presence with such beastly frames.

Quickly
losing
what was
got in the
Duty.

In case we were in a good frame in the Duty, Did we labour to retain the influences of Ordinance upon our hearts? Did not we let the fire go out again? Have not we, like Samson, in a great sweat, gone into the open air to cool soon, and took a cold? That's dangerous. David was more careful to maintain his firm and lively frames, and therefore he entreated the Lord to keep the same in his Service heart for ever.

Not looking
for an
answer.
Psal. 5. 3.
85. 8.

How have we been faulty, in not believing that our Prayers shall be answered. We direct our Prayer unto God, but we do not look till God look down, as David. We do not hearken what God the Lord will speak. We observed how long the Lord was silent to our Prayer, For this I besought the Lord still, and yet no answer. O! when shall we resolve with Habbakkuk, to stand upon watch, and look and see what he will say to us? The neglect of this hath bred so many Formalists in our Congregations. After we have put our Prayers into Gods hands, we never mind them more. We would be angry with Beggars, if they begged an alms, and away presently, as careless answers.

2 Cor. 12.
8.

Hab. 2. 1.

The first
evidence
turns the
them, and
case of
Hannah
was so lo
What
Wordlin
are not
creature
ty, but
there, or
observed
favored b
Have no
vomits
ary.
Have
snare'd
Lords h
neither
your in
your Go
you, th
How
vice in
with on
and en
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hate ca
God.
away,
your fi

The sincerity of thy heart would be more evidenced, if thou didst consider what returns thou hast that thou maist bless God for them, and improve them for God, and in case of denials, to be of a *troubled Spirit* as *Hannah* was, for that her Prayer for a Child was so long denied.

What mournings hast thou for that thy Pride, Wordliness, Unbelief, hardness of Heart, &c. are not yet pardoned and subdued. Poor creature, thou continuest in the road of Duty, but observeest not whether God hears thee, or not, *Saul* went beyond thee: He observed, and was troubled, *that God answered him not by Urim, nor yet by Prophets.* Have not we by carelessness, by returning to our vomits and mires, intercepted our own Prayers.

Have not we torn our own Petitions, and snatched them out of Gods hands? *Behold the Lords hand is not shortened that it cannot save, neither is his ear heavy that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear?*

How seldom have we took *Bernards* advice in his gloss upon, *Let us lift up our hearts with our hands*, that is (saith he) let us pray and endeavour. We love to employ God to subdue our sins, &c. But we sit idle, we hate taking pains; we are not co-workers with God. I may say unto you, as Christ, *I go away, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins. The Heathen shall know that the*

Not blessing God for answers.

1 Sam. i. 15.

Not mourning for denials.

1 Sam. 28. 6.

Tearing their own Petitions. Isa. 59. 1, 2.

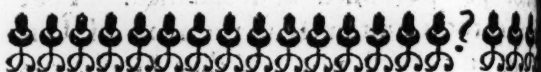
Not joyning endeavour. Oremus & Laboremus.

Joh. 8. 21. Ezek. 39. 23.

house

Mic. 3: 4.

house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity because they trespassed against me, therefore I hid my face from them. Then shall they cry unto the Lord, but he will not hear them, he will even hide his face from them, at that time, as they have behaved themselves ill in their doings. Prayer is a Key to open Heaven to Believers; but it may be managed, as to open Hell to thee.



CHAP. XV.

Their slighting the written Word of God especially in not reading, and meditating on it, as they ought.

Professours
despising
Gods writ-
ten Word.

8ly. **S**lighting of the written word of God is another piece of ungodliness, which English Professours have been very guilty of. There is not a surer sign of despising any person than the setting light by what he saith unto us; for according to the honour we give unto the Speaker, the words spoken will be of weight with us. But alas! how hath the Bible, Gods written word, been undervalued by us?

Evidenced
in their not
crediting it.

How little have we credited Gods written word? And yet it is natural for us to believe whatsoever is said by one, of whose truth we are

are confident. Have not *Scripture-affirmations* been doubted of by us? How little hath our knowledge of them been attended with *building a Christian life upon them as a foundation*? Have we believed that *Scripture-commands* come from God, and are most just and fit for him to lay upon us? Hath this belief brought forth *obedience*? Have we believed that *Scripture-threats* are *Gods-threats*, and will therefore be performed to every impenitent Sinner? And hath this belief kept us from sin, or promoted repentance? Have *Scripture-promises* been believed to be *Gods-promises*, and that therefore all the *absolute* ones shall certainly be performed to the Elect, and all the *conditional* ones, to those that perform the conditions? And hath this belief stirred us up, and helped us to perform the conditions?

God hath magnified his Word above all his Name; but so have not we. We are apt to be afraid at the appearances of the great God in his extraordinary works in the World; but who trembleth at the appearances of God in the Scriptures? And yet God appears more in the glory of his Majesty therein, than in all his other works, whether of Creation, or of common Providence. God maketh more account of his written Word than of Heaven and Earth: he had rather lose Heaven and Earth than one iota or tittle of his Word.

But have not we accounted it no great matter to swerve a little from the written Word of God? Yea have not we made a light matter of leaving

Psal. 138.2.
Not honouring it above Gods other Names.

Mat. 5.8.

Accounted it a small matter to swerve from it.

ing undone what is therein required, and doing what is therein forbidden? Were the Scriptures high in our esteems, did we look upon Gods testimonies as wonderful things, our very Souls would be in keeping them. *Thy testimonies are wonderful, therefore doth my Soul keep them.*

Psal. 119.
129.

Account-
ing tender
Consciences
more nice
than wise.
Rev. 6. 9.

Have not we accounted them fools that have preferred the Word before whatsoever hath been near and dear unto them in this World? Have not we accounted them more nice than men who have been slain for the Word, who have lost Name, Liberty, Livelihood, Friends, Relations, yea Life it self, and endured all Torments and Tortures, rather than they would offend the written Word of God in any thing, either by omission, or commission?

Account-
ing it a
strange
thing.
Hos. 8. 12.

God hath written to us the great things of the Law (or word) but have they not been accounted a strange thing, a thing that we should have got little good, if we had obeyed them, and little hurt by disobeying them? Have we used the Word as a stranger, only for our own ends, to serve our own turns, as we have had advantage thereby?

Making the
Word a
stalking-
horse.

Have not we made the Word a stalking horse for our own carnal designs? Have we pretended very great Zeal for the Word when all the while we have been Zealous for self, either our own opinions and persuasions, or our own honour and greatness, or our own livelihood? Have not we, like boatmen, looked one way, and rowed another, cryed, the Word of the Lord, but meant the other thing?

Have

Have not even Scripture Doctrines eb'd and flow'd upon politick considerations?

How ſeldome have we diſcourſed with others Scripturally? The Scholar is upon every occasion diſcourſing of thoſe Notions, which he prizeth; but hath not our ſpeech betray'd our low eſteems of the Word?

Have not we been willingly and contentedly ignorant of Scripture-diſcoveries? So is not the Scholar of thoſe Notions which he affects and valueth. Have not our hearts cry'd out many times unto the Bible, depart from us for we deſire not the knowledge of Gods wayes, either as to worſhip, or manners, and that be- cauſe knowledge is an obligation, yea a provo- cation to duty, and a ſting in caſe duty be neg- lected?

What things we prize we ſearch into; But how little have we ſearched the Scriptures, as diggers in Mines do ſearch for gold and ſilver in the Earth, as the Word ſignifieth? And this leads me to thoſe two main Evidences of our ſlighting the written Word of God, our not reading, and not meditating upon it, as we ought, which I ſhall a little enlarge upon.

How have we been guilty of not reading the Scriptures as we ought? That every one ought to read them, is ſo evident, that there is no way for the Papists to keep men from believ- ing this truth, but by keeping of them from reading the Scripture. No buſineſs can diſ- charge any from this duty, and yet how is this evident duty neglected? Some have not been ſo farr wrought upon, as from ſenſe of their

Not talk-
ing of it.
Deut. 6. 7.

Willingly
ignorant
of it.
Job 41. 14.

Not ſearch-
ing the
Scriptures.
Joh. 5. 39.

Not read-
ing them.
Deut. 31.
11.
Matth. 12.
3. 5.
21. 16.
Luk. 10. 26.
Deut. 17.
19.

their own ignorance and blindness in things that concern their Everlasting welfare and from conviction, that they can know such things only by the help of the written Word of God, to take up firm resolutions, and undertake the study of the Scripture?

At all.

Others notwithstanding their resolution never set upon the reading of the Bible. They have seen no excellency in this book; they have seen more in a piece of Philosophy, in a rational discourse of Divinity, in an ingenious History, in a politick discourse, yet in a Romance, or in a Play, *Politician-like*, who prefer'd an *Ode* in *Pindar* before all *David's Psalms*.

Often enough.

How many read the Bible too seldom, thinking it too much to read it daily, to spend one hour therein every day? Have not some spent several hours in a day, in reading some good books of mens inditing, but not a quarter of an hour in reading Gods-book? *I even hate mine own works* (said Luther) *and oft-times wish they were burnt; because I feared lest they should withdraw men from reading the Scriptures.*

Arigh,
not reverently.
2 Sam. 7.
13.

How much greater is the Number of those that have not read the Bible aright? Are not all of us in this number; When have we prepared for the reading of the Scriptures, as becometh those that are going in unto God (that is, going into the Sanctuary, where the Word of God was kept, is termed.)

Tremblingly.

Have not we read fearlessly? When were we going to take the Bible into our hands

have we trembled at the Word? lest we should not sanctifie the Name of God, yea, lest we should take the Name of God in vain in our reading? Isa. 66. 2.

Have not we read heedlessly? Not diligently marking the *Duties* commanded, the *Sins* forbidden, the *Rewards* promised, and the *Punishments* threatned therein? Have not our thoughts been wandering and gadding, and not fixed upon what we read? When did we attend to Scripture words, as heedfully, as Benbadad's Messengers did to the words of Abah? Attentively. I Kings 20. 33.

Have not we read unbelievingly? Not believing that the Scripture is the Word of God; that whatever we read therein is true and good; that the Spirit of God, the Inditer of every word in this Book, did particularly intend our good in every Verse; that in the Scripture Life and Death is set before us; yea, that Scripture words are our *Life*? Believingly Deut. 29. 9. Rom. 15. 4. Josh. 1. 5. compared with Heb. 13. 5.

Have not we read out of custome, and not conscienciously, in obedience to the command of God? Conscienciously.

Have not we read for wrong ends? Either to satisfy our curiosity, and not regulate our hearts and lives: or to have matter of discourse, but not matter of practice; to have Scripture at our tongues end, not at our hearts: or only to know, being ashamed to be ignorant of those things, which all Christians know; and to be able to say nothing of such matters, which we cannot but have occasion divers times in company to talk of, but not to do? For right Ends. When

Pfal. 119.
105.

Quid est?
Scriptura
Sacra nisi
quædam
Epistola
Omni potestis
Dei ad
Creaturam
suam.
Greg.

Hof. 8. 12.

With
Prayer.

Jer. 4. 3.

When did we read the Scriptures with particular intention, that they might be a *Lamp unto our feet*; and a *Light unto our paths*? That we might thereby be helped to *order our conversation aright*? When did we read the Bible with the same attention, reverence, and resolution, to follow the rule therein; as we think we would if we had lived when Christ was upon Earth? When did we receive a Letter from him, directing us what to believe and do, that we might be saved? Or as we think we should a Book written immediately by the finger of God, as he wrote the Ten Commandments in two Tables? When did we read the Bible as Gods Letter to every one of us in particular, written by himself, though immediately: *I have written to him the great and precious promise of my Law*: To him, it is in the finger of God, because to every man and woman in particular. When did we read the Bible as Children read the last Will and Testament of their deceased Parent?

Have not we read the Scripture, without the *begging of God his Spirit*, to help us to understand what we read, and to practise what we understand; at least, not so importunately, as we would, if we had been begged for our Lives, at the Barr of a Judge? Have not we sown this seed among thornes, in unplowed hearts, and have not so much as prayed to God, to take away the heart of stone, and to give an heart of flesh, a teachable, pliable, tractable spirit, ready to receive every good vine impression? O! when shall we meet

conscience of reading the Scriptures daily as we ought? *The Emperor of Heaven* (saith Gregory the Great) *the Lord of Angels and Men hath sent to you; that which concerns your life, and will you (still) neglect to read it with a fervent and zealous Spirit?*

How guilty have we been in not meditating in the Word of God as we ought? How little, if at all, have we dwelt in our serious thoughts upon the matters contained in the written Word of God, to the end we might understand how much they do concern us, and that our hearts may thereby be raised to some holy affections and resolutions? Though meditation be commanded as a chief means sanctified by God for the keeping of his Word; though we cannot be holy and happy without it altogether; though it be one of the profitablest duties of a Christian: the Reader and Studier of Scripture may see the beauty, and smell the sweetness of the flowers that grow in this Divine Garden; but it is the Mediator, the Christian-Bee, that gathers the honey out of them; though it be the duty by which the Soul digests truths, and draweth forth their strength for its nourishment and refreshment; yea, the duty by which all other duties are improved; yet how much is this duty neglected by all sorts of Professors, because though it be the delightfullest task to the Spirit, yet it is the most tedious to the Flesh, that ever men on earth were employed in.

No: meditating.

Josh. i. 8.
Psalm i. 2.

Have not many been long Professors, and yet if they would tell all the truth, they will

At all.

confess they never spent one hour together meditating on the most weighty Scriptures, on God, on Mans Estate by Creation, Degeneration, Regeneration, Glorification, on Christ, on the Vanity of the Creature, on the Beauty of Holiness, on Death, on Judgement, on Heaven, and Hell. "Meditation (saith Mr. Baxter in his Saints) is confessed to be a duty by all, but by constant neglect denied by most: and (I know) not by what fatal customary security comes to pass, that men, that are tender Conscienced toward most other duties, yet do as easily overslip this, they knew it not to be a duty at all: that are presently troubled in mind, if they omit a Sermon, a Fast, a Prayer in public or private, yet were never troubled that they have omitted Meditation, (perhaps all their life time unto this very day.)

Aright.

How few have managed this duty aright. Hath not that which we call Meditation been but Study only? Hath not some controversial point, or some nice speculation been the matter of our Meditation? Hereby we evidence that we have not so great spiritual hunger after Righteousness, as we should: Hungry men (saith one) do not use to stand and pick bones, when they have meat enough to eat. Hath not our end in meditating been only the increasing of our knowledge, and not the improving of our knowledge? Hath not we begun this work without God? What if we were going about to Meditate, have

we neglected Prayer for help from Heaven to go through with the work, though without God we can neither know, resolve upon, nor perform what is good; for from him, yea, from *his own good pleasure comes both the will and the deed?* Have not we idled away our meditating seasons? If we have sequestred our selves from worldly businesses, and company, for meditation at any time, have not we idled away that time, by suffering our thoughts to gad and wander up and down to no purpose, to be sure not to fetch in considerations for the stamping holy impressions upon our hearts and lives? Have not we in meditating been *without a due sense of Gods presence?* May not we cry out, *sure the Lord was in such and such a place* where I have been meditating, *and I knew it not*, i.e. I considered it not. Hath not the work of our understandings in this business been to retain, and not to convey truth into the heart? Have our understandings represented what should work holy affections and resolutions *right?* Have they presented things *good*, of a Divine and Heavenly nature as God, Christ, Heaven, &c. in their *prime and beauty?* Have they presented things in their nature simply *evil*, as Sin, Gods wrath, Hell, *at their worst?* Have not we left off meditating before we attained the end of Meditation? before holy affections and resolutions are wrought? Have not we *rush'd out* of this duty as well as *rush'd into it?* Have not we gone from this work, *as a bird out of the snare*, with joy and speed? Have not we ended as well as *begun* this

Gen. 28. 16.

work *without* God? not praying to God
 strength to perform, what we have been
 abled by grace to resolve upon for God;
 for *pardon* of what hath been amiss in the
 ty? O! when will *English* Professors
 prevailed with to make conscience of this
 ty of duties? "I once more intreat thee
 "use Mr. *Baxters* words) as thou art a
 "that maketh conscience of a revealed de
 "and that dardest not wilfully resist the Sp
 "as thou valuest the high delights of a Sa
 "and the Soul-ravishing exercise of Heav
 "ly Contemplation, and as thou art faith
 "to the peace and prosperity of thine
 "Soul, that thou speedily and diligently
 "upon this great duty.

Conside-
 rations
 against
 slighting
 Gods writ-
 ten Word.

O! what a mighty blessing is it to have
 a book, wherein are written by God him
 the great counsels of his will concerning
 Eternal Salvation? What a sin is it that
 have low, mean, yea vile and base thoughts
 it? Is not our slighting of the Word of
 Lord the cause of all the wickedness in
 hearts and lives? Whence are all our
 ons and commissions, but because we make
 light matter of sinning against the Scriptures
 Certainly this great provocation hath a
 hand in our miseries, and threatneth utter
 ine to us. *Who so despiseth the Word shall be*
stroyed: Therefore as the fire devoureth the straw
and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their rottenness
be rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as smoke
because they have cast away the Law of the Lord
Hosts, and despised the Word of the Holy One
Israel.

Pro. 13. 13.
 Isa. 5. 24.



CHAP. XVI.

Their miscarriages about the Promises.

goly. **M**uch Ungodliness is also evidenced in Professors miscarriages about the Promises of the Word; the promises being the great promoters of godliness in the world, not only as arguments to induce it, by shewing how God will reward it: but likewise as principles of godliness, or the chief instrument, whereby God makes Souls partakers of the Divine nature.

Professors
miscarria-
ges about
the Pro-
mises.

1. *How little do we believe the truth of the Promises? How little do we believe that the Spirit of God and glory rests on them, that suffer for Christ, and his Gospel? and that as tribulations do abound for Christ, so shall consolations by him? or that we shall have an hundred fold advantage by any loss we sustain for Christ and his concernments? All that fear of man, all that cowardise, all those tremblings of heart, that are upon Professors this day; all that enmity against the Cross of Christ, which appears on the faces, and hearts of men, are clear demonstrations how little the promises for the bearing up under suffering, for the deliverance out of suffering, or rewarding of*

Not be-
lieving
their
truth.

suffering for Christ are believed : We cannot set the *Promises* against all *Crosses*.

Not praising them enough.

2. *How low are our esteems of the Promises of God, of the great and faithful God, in comparison of what they are concerning the Promises of honest and sufficient men? I appeal to thee, if a King should promise thee a thousand pound per annum, whether it would not more rejoyce thine heart, than the Promises of eternal Life, which God hath made unto thee, do? With how few Professors are the promises of God exceeding great and precious?*

2 Pet. 1. 4.

Not admiring Gods condescension therein.

3. *How little do we admire at Gods stooping so low, as to oblige himself by promise to us as we? God might have dealt with us by way of absolute Sovereignty and Dominion, imposing only upon us commands to do our duty, without adjoyning any promise of reward, he being our Creator, and we his Creatures : It is his great condescension, that he deal with us by way of promise, which is not only an insinuation and signification of what he will do, but a laying a bond or obligation upon himself to do so and so. Herein God condescends more unto Man, than unto fallen Angels : they have not any one, or the least Promise of any good, made by God unto them. And yet how little are we in admiration?*

Not blessing God for them.

4. *How little do we bless the Lord for his Jewels, that are wrapt up in the promises : the Fruit, that hangs on this Tree of Life.*

1 Jo. 2. 25. *This is the promise, that he hath promised*

even eternal Life. A Crown is promised : He shall receive the Crown of Life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. A Kingdom is promised : Hearken, my beloved Brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in Faith, and heirs of the Kingdom, which he hath promised to them that love him? Yet how unthankfull? This doubtless proceeds from our diffidence of the reality and faithfulness of the Promiser, and therefore that shall be another Question.

Jam. 1. 12.

Jam. 2. 5.

5. How little do we rely upon God, to make good his promises? How many think God the Promiser as changeable as themselves? Men in Boats, being in constant motion upon the Waters, are apt to fancy, that the Land and Trees move, as they themselves do : So many Christians think, as oft as they fail in point of strict duty, God will fail too. Who layes all the stress upon the faithfulness of him that hath promised? Do not we lean partly to the Promises, and partly to our own endeavours, and the means we use, and so divide our dependencies betwixt the Promises of God, and our own Duties, to bring in pardons, peace, holiness, or any outward comforts?

Not relying on the Promiser.

6. Do not we eye Promises, without eying Christ? Do not we dote on the Bracelets, but neglect the Friend? Do not some set a greater value on the Promise, than on Christ's Person : Though the Promises are only the Christ's Streams of that River of Life, which proceedeth out of the Throne of God, and the Lamb;

Not eying Christ in them.

Rev. 22. 1.

Not hoping
for the
good of
them.

Exod. 5.
22, 23.

Not wait-
ing for the
good of
them.
Heb. 10. 36.

yet do not we make them the *Primary*, and not the *Secondary* Object of Faith? We look upon Promises only as Instruments, to bring Christ, and the Soul together?

7. *How little do we hope for the good laid in the Promises?* What fearful expectations have many Professors, though they are close with God, though they abstain from the which is evil, though they fulfill after Gods the utmost of their power, though they do not sign which way to walk in all well-pleasing, ing fruitful in every good word and work: yet how cast down, how discouraged are they how do they pine away, and their hearts dwindle within them? how are they as Reeds shaken as Ships driven, and cannot cast anchor with the Vail? Moses himself was shaken, when deliverance of Gods own promising met with opposition: And Moses said, Lord, wherefore hast thou so evil intreated this people? is it that thou hast sent me? For since I came to Pharaoh, to speak in thy Name, he hath done evil to this people, neither hast thou delivered thy people at all. It is Gods wonted course to bring signal mercies under a sentence of death, before we enjoy them: and yet how prevailing is unbelief, when God declares and the Promise is obstructed? How faint are we? Our hope is not lively.

8. *How little do we wait, till that good which is in the Promises, be given out to us.* I may truly say to many, yea, to most, ye have need of Patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye may receive the promise.

sure, The Vision is for an appointed time, and Hab. 2. 3.
God would have us to wait, though it tarry ;
because it will not tarry, beyond the time ap-
pointed by the wise and faithful God : But,
though God never fail of his own time, yet
he seldom comes at ours, and then we run
into unbelief, if not impatency of spirit.
How oft do we Antedate the Promise, and
set it a time before Gods time ? Patience hath Jam. 1. 4.
not its perfect work, so that if God save us out
of our miseries, we shall not be able to say as
the Church, Lo, this is our God, we have Isa. 25. 9.
waited for him, and he will save us : This is
the Lord, we have waited for him, we will be
glad and rejoyce in his salvation. This li-
miting the holy One of Israel, either as to
means, (when we tye up the Lord to work
by wayes and causes of our own) or to dayes
and hours of our own bold and impudent
prescription, is no small provocation. How oft
did they provoke him in the Wilderness ; and Psal. 78.
grieve him in the Desert ? Yea, they turned 40. 41.
back, and tempted God, and limited the holy
One of Israel. Some will wait a moneth or
two for the Promise of Pardon, that they
may have peace in their Consciences, and for
Promises of outwards ; but when they see
nothing comes of their waiting, then there is 2 Kings 6.
no hope, why should I wait on the Lord any 33.
longer ? That Wretch waited a little, but not
long enough. We allow time to the Physician
to cure us, we yield, that he knows the fit-
test time to apply cordials ; but we yield not
so much to God : We would have the smart-

1 Sam. 27.
1.

Isa. 35. 4.

Isa. 28. 16.

Isa. 60. 22.
Psal. 102.
13.

Abusing
Promises.

ing Plaister pulled off, before the Wound healed; whereas it is best for us, to have kept on. *David's* foot was almost slipt, when he saw the Promise of the Kingdom deferred; he makes a bad inference from the delay, *day I shall fall by the hand of Saul.* We do stay our selves on the Promises, till the thing promised be given into our bosoms. *David* waited patiently; but so do not we: Our hearts are not at rest, but we stagger like *Drunkards*, we reel this way, and that way, but are not established and settled: *In this* we are not confident, that *God who hath promised* cannot lye, and therefore will perform the word, that is gone forth from an unfeigned lip: We are too hasty in our desires, whereas God knows the fittest season for the Promise to bring forth: We shall have it when the time is come; but we hasten the birth, and spoyl the conception. The Prophet of old complains of some, that they were of an hasty heart: whereas, He that believeth, maketh not haste. God defers, to put an edge on our desires, a value on what is promised, and to exercise our Faith. The Word, that is gone forth out of the mouth of the God of truth, should quiet; but it doth not. *I the Lord will hasten it in its time. The Lord will arise, and have mercy upon Zion, when the time to favour her, yea, when the set time is come.* And is not Gods time the best?

9. How have many abused, rather than applied Promises? How many dogs take the Children's

Children
of the
doth
read
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Usurp
goods
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Children's Bread? How many Hypocrites taste of the forbidden fruit? Lay hold on that which doth not belong unto them? When they read those sweet delicious promises of the pardon of Sin, of the love of God, of the freeness of grace, of the glory to come, they count them as theirs, whereas they are but *Usurpers*, they set their mark on *another's* goods: they are *thieves* and *robbers*; for they are *strangers to the Promises*. How many abuse the mercy of God in the Promises, so that even the Promises become an occasion of stumbling, whilst they continue in sin, in hopes of pardons through the Promises? We are not led by the sweetness of the Promise to Repentance; but rather harden our hearts, presuming of pardons on course from the God of grace: Gluttons surfeit soonest upon the greatest dainties: thus many venture to continue to sin that grace may abound: hence Repentance is put off; because men hope God will abundantly pardon, when ever the wicked forsakes his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts. The Promises are not made a Sanctuary unto which men fly from sin, but as a Sanctuary to protect them in their sinful courses. God is merciful, slow to wrath, he will abundantly pardon, &c. therefore, &c. Do not we overlook all the threatenings and terrible denunciations of God against our sins; and wholly pitch on the comfortable Promises of the Gospel? Do not we eye Promises, and yet hate Commands? Do not we mind Temporal Promises, with the neglect of Spiritual; and

and therein disparage God, by setting a dearer value on Earth than on Heaven, on our back and bellies, than on God? Do not we eye the Promises that speak of mercy, and pass over those that lead to duty? View we pleasure pardoning Promises, but neglect the Promises of sprinkling us with clean water, and that Sin shall not have Dominion over us? We like it, that *God will be true to God*; but we love not to be *Gods people*, under his command, and at his dispose. He do we eye the *absolute Promises*, but neglect the *conditional*? We take hold of Promises of deliverance, when under any misery; but we forget the condition: *If my people shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their evil ways, &c.* little is the command minded by us, which the Prophet speaks, *what instant I shall speak concerning a Nation, and concerning a Kingdom to build and to plant it, if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good which I said I would benefit them.* We love we like, Promised mercies, and every one is looked upon as an unbelieving *Thomas*, that doubts of the mercy, but we overlook the preparatory duties of Fasting, Praying, Repenting and Reforming our hearts and ways &c. Hence men dote almost on the Promises of grace; but secretly hate the Promises of grace; because they find no gracious qualifications in themselves: they love to hear of Gods readiness to pardon; but they are loath to hear that they must come to Christ for Repentance

Jer. 18. 9,
10.

penitance and then for Remission; they would fain have the penny, but they cannot endure labour. God hath linked his Promises and our seeking together. Thus saith the Lord God, I will yet Exek. 36. for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do 37. it for them: But how many of us do either altogether neglect, or slothfully go about to perform the condition of the Promise? Are not some of us altogether strangers to faith, the condition of the whole covenant of grace? know not what an heart purifying faith means? We never gave our selves unto the Lord, yet run away with the Promises of forgiveness: though ignorant of the Mediator betwixt God and sinful creatures, though full of pride and high conceits of our own Righteousness, though we live in an open despite of the Gospel of Christ, though we cannot but find an incomppliance of heart with subjection to Christ, yet we boast *Abraham is our Father, the blessing of Abraham is come upon us, the Promises are ours.* How do the Promises of God make some slothfull in the use of appointed means? How formal in duties are we? May it not be said of us, as of the Image, *there is somewhat wanting within?* Deest al- Are not we silly doves without heart? quid intus. Are not we only bolstered up with the Promises? O these pillows under our heads make us *slumbring Virgins*: All is well, God is merciful, &c. but we do not sweat and get our living by labour, we strive not to enter in at the straight gate, &c. We look for the blessed hope, but we live not soberly. I know (saith God) the thoughts that I think

Jer. 29.
11, 12.

Nicely
applying
them.

Not ap-
plying
them, till
they have
what they
should
apply them
for.

towards you, thoughts of peace, but not of evil; give you an expected end; but be ſure, they will call upon me, and go and pray unto me, and I will bearken unto you.

10. *How nice and curious are ſome in applying of Promiſes?* They forſooth take no pleaſure in any Promiſes, but ſuch as they think no hand touched before their own: They neglect the plain, clear, open, rich Promiſes of the Goſpel; and if any be more ſtrife, and hard to be found out, by an ordinary eye, they are greedily ſuck'd in. They are only or mainly for myſtical Promiſes. Such think they are delighted with the goodneſs of the Promiſe, whereas they are only pleaſed with the newneſs of it, or with their own invention, and that they can be ſtruck farther into a Mill-ſtone than another. I have known ſome of theſe, and I have ſeen what is become of them: their pride and deſecration hath led them alſo from the plain paths of holineſs.

11. *How many will not cloſe with a Promiſe (ſuch is their folly) till the thing promiſed be found within them?* Becauſe their hearts are corrupt, therefore they will not apply to the Promiſes of ſubduing iniquity, and of purifying the heart: whereas there is no way to get their corrupt hearts cleanſed, but by laying hold on ſuch Promiſes; and the longer they keep off the Promiſe, the worſe it will be with them: There is no other way, but by this Ark, to eſcape drowning: and the longer they wander in this *Wilderneſs*, the more

more hard it will be at last to enter into Canaan: the longer they keep off from the promise, the more corrupt will their hearts grow, and the more corrupt they grow, the work of the heart-purifying-faith will be the more difficult.

12. *How many of us eye Providences more than Promises?* and make the Providences, rather than the Promises of God, the Ground of their Faith? One saith well, "The Star-light of one single Promise, is of more use to Christians, than a Constellation of many Providences, both to assure them in their wayes, and to support them under any difficulties."

Eying Providences more than Promises.

13. *Do not we pretend to eye the Promises, and yet use indirect means to bring our devices to pass?* We have pretended to live the Life of Faith; but God knows what shifts men have had, and wicked (at least questionable) courses men have taken; how much evil hath been done, that good may come. Have not we, to help Gods Promises to bring forth, turned out of Gods way, resisted Dignities, offered Violence to known Laws, wronged Conscience, forgot all Obligations upon us, regarded nothing that stood in our way of compassing our designs?

Using indirect means for getting what is promised.

14. *How little do we examine the Fruits of Gods Promises in our own Souls?* The exceeding great and precious Promises are given, that we might be partakers of the Divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust: that we might purifie our selves,

Not looking that they attain their ends in our Souls.
2 Pet. 1. 4.
1 Jo. 3. 3.

2 Cor. 7. 1. selves, even as God is pure : But do we
for these ends to be attained by the Prom
in our Souls? Do we look not only
Change from Looseness to Civility, but
through Sanctification in Body, Mind, and Spirit
Alas! which of us can say, *Having these*
miseries, we do cleanse our selves from all filthiness
Flesh and Spirit, and are perfecting holiness in
fear of God.



CHAP. XVII.

Their Abuse of Providence.

Professors
Abuse of
Provi-
dence.

101y. **A** *Buse of Providence is another branch*
of Ungodliness, too much spread
among Professors. God is to be honoured,
only as the chiefest Good, and as the Supreme
Truth and Authority; but as the first Cause,
giveth Being to all things, and therefore
decreth and disposeth of all things as he pleaseth,
having absolute Dominion over all events.
But O, how is God dishonoured, by abusing
his Providence? The blind World are not only
guilty, who do not acknowledge God at
the other end of Causes, as swaying all things
by his Wisdom and Power, but set up an Idol
called *Chance*; but even Professors, eminent
Professors, are herein very guilty.

1. *How seldom do we observe Gods Providence? The Finger of God is in all the Creatures; not only We, but all Creatures live, move, and have their Being, from God, and in God: The whole course of Nature moves, as it is turned by the hand of God, and directed by his counsel: It is not with the work of God, as with the Artificers Clock, which, put into a frame, and hanged with weights, will go; though the Artificer be off from it; but though God set all the Creatures in frame, yet the motion of every wheel depends on God. There is not a drop of rain falls, till God utter his voice, and cause the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth: Yet how is God not minded? We see not his footsteps: We may say in this, He passeth this way, and that, and we see him not. Our eyes are held to secondary Causes; We look when the Wind, or Moon, will change; but we are so short-sighted, that we reach not God. How seldom do we consider, that though Gods Providence doth deliver up his choicest Friends, into the bands of his and their Enemies, yet doth it not deliver them up unto their will: they cannot do what they please, but only what pleaseth God: Such as are Gods own are still engraven on the palms of his hands, though turned over into the hands of the Ungodly: they are Gods Favourites still, though the wicked say, Persecute them, and take them, for God hath forsaken them. How little do we mind, that our times are in Gods hands; and that as Satan is*

Evidenced
in their
non-ob-
serving it.

Jer. 10. 13.

Isa. 8. 12,
13, 14.

Not being
affected
therewith.

But di-
trusting it.

in a Chain, so are his Instruments : We see Men more than God. O, when shall we hear that Word of God, Say not a confederacy to all them to whom this people shall say a confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. Sanctifie the Lord of Hosts himself, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread : And he shall be for a Sanctuary, &c.

2. How little are we affected with the continual course of Providence, though it guards us keeps us every moment ? The Stars in the courtes would fight against us : the Sea would swallow us up, and break in as a devourer : the Beasts of the Field would arm against us if God did not check them, and bound them : yea, one man would eat up another, were it not for the Lord, who sets bounds to the rage of all the Creatures. It is the eye of jealousy that is still wakeful for us : it is the Lord, that puts the hook into the nose, and the bridle in the lips, of the Senacherib of the World ; and yet how little are our hearts affected? how little are they comforted, & bound up? how little do they cleave unto the Lord?

On the contrary : How distrustful are we of Gods Providence, in a time of seen dangers, though we are wonderfully delivered from invisible ones every day ? Who can number the legions of Devils ? so many deliverances hast thou by Gods Providence every moment ; and yet how diffident and doubting are we, upon all new imminent outward dangers ? How little do we believe, that God will bring in good to us, by such Providence

as are ungrateful to Sense, to Flesh and Blood? Though nothing is more usual, than for God to take away some comforts, and lay in better comforts; to take away an *Abel*, and make it up in *Seth*: to deprive *Noah* of the comforts of the whole World for a while, and then to wash it from its filthiness, and to deliver him the possession of it, with manifest proofs of his singular distinguishing care of him and his Family, whilst all the rest of the Creatures perished in the waters: to deprive *Mary* and *Martha* of their Brother *Lazarus*, and to return him from the dead unto them with great advantage: to deprive *Job* of his Children and Estate, to make his last dayes better than his first, and to give him *twice as much as he had before*; for *seven thousand Sheep*, he had *fourteen thousand*; before he had *three thousand Camels*, afterwards *six thousand*; before *five hundred Asses*, then *one thousand*; yet how little can we trust Providence in such cases? How hardly were the Disciples perswaded, that the absence of their Lord and Master, *Jesus Christ*, should be supplied in the Spirit? And yet saith Christ, *Nevertheless I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him to you.* Christ in his Spirit, dwelling in our hearts, is better than Christ in Flesh, dwelling in our houses. When the unclean Spirit departs from a man, and returns again, he brings seven Spirits worse than himself, and the latter end of that man is worse

Job 1. 3.
compared
with Chap.
42. 10, 12.

Joh. 16. 7.

Mat. 12. 43.

Jer. 30. 15,
16, 17.

Psal. 107.
7.

than his beginning; but when Christ withdrew from Earth to Heaven, he brings seven consolations better than at first, in the pouring forth of the Comforter, and the end of such (in whom the Spirit supplies the want of Christ's bodily presence) is better than the beginning. *Why cryest thou for thine affliction? thy sorrow is incurable for the multitude of thine iniquity, &c. Therefore all they that devour thee, shall be devoured, &c. for I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the Lord, because they called thee an outcast, &c.* Nothing more usual with God than to make the loss of one comfort, the means of enjoying another with advantage, yea, with the advantage of the hundred fold: But alas! most fear they shall be losers by Christ and for Christ. God doth as Mariners, row one way, and look another: he brings most of his great ends about by looking quite aside from what he hath a special intent to bring to pass: the Lord seldom proceeds in a direct way to his ends, i. e. in a right way to our apprehensions, in such a way as we would have him go in; but he leads us about, as he did Israel, and yet that was the right way indeed: though the means seem to oppose the end; yet he works to the praise of his Name: he can write right by a crooked pen, and bring honey out of the Cask of the Lion: make use of strange instruments, break down Jericho's walls by the sound of Rams-horns: But O! how little do we trust Providence when the means are not probable

to effect our expected end? Who believes there shall be light in the Evening? And that Sarah shall have a posterity as the Stars in the Firmament for multitude, and as the sand on the Sea shore, which is innumerable, when she was old, had been barren so long, and her Lord old also? Who will think that the Sun and the Stars should bow to Joseph, when he lies in the Pit, or is in the Dungeon of the Heathen King? How slow to believe were the Disciples, when Christ is dead and buried, and lies three dayes in the Grave? We thought this should have been he that should have delivered Israel. How little doth the Worm Jacob (Jacob when reduced as low as the earth, when creeping into holes for security, when as contemptible as a worm, that no man scruples to tread upon, when so easily to be destroyed, as a Worm) believe, that yet the Worm Jacob shall thresh the mountains and fan them, and the wind shall carry them away? Alas! how unseemly is the behaviour of many, if Providence thwarts them in taking away a Child, an Husband, an Estate, how discouraged and cast down are we, as if God in his Providence had pulled down that, which he could never build again, or rooted up that which he could never plant again. O! how few believe that if God pull down their brick-houses, that he will build them again of hewn-stones, and that if he consume their Fir-trees, he will build again with Cedars? Do not many afflicted Christians think it impossible for their sorrow to be turned into joy?

Zech. 14. 7
He. 11. 12.

Luke 24.
21, 25.

Isa. 41. 15,
16, 17.

Hence de-
jectedness
under Cross
Providences.

Pfal. 42. 5.

Pfal. 46.
1, 2.

Boyling
of revenge.

Whence is all our dejectedness under Cross Providences, but from our not believing that all things are disposed by the wise and gracious Providence of God? We believe not enough that *the Eyes of our loving Father run to and fro throughout the Earth, to search himself Marvellous for our help in a time of need and danger. David was thus overtaken, till he school'd himself into a better frame, with Why art thou cast down, O my Soul. and why art thou disquieted in me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance. Few can say, God is our refuge and strength: a very present help in trouble. Therefore will we not fear, though the Earth be removed: and though the Mountains be carried into the midst of the Sea. Few believe, that if the Lord be pleased to lay a great burden upon their shoulders, he will give great strength to bear it, and if he gives but little strength, he will surely proportion the burden to it. Whence are all our uproars of Spirit, and disquietness of heart, but from our not trusting upon Providence? When God is *working desolation*, did we see it his work, we would be still. David was so when strangely provoked by Shimei's insolency and railings. God had bid Shimei curse Abisha was not so much concerned in the affront, as David, but he sees not God in the lips of Shimei, and therefore his Spirit is inflamed.*

All the boylings of Revenge that are in the hearts of men one against another may be attributed

attributed to mans blindness. and injudicious view of things, they see not the wicked to be Gods Sword to let out their corruption: they do not believe that God intends to pursue gracious designs by such instruments. Joseph was easily conquered and perswaded to forgive the unkindness, yea, the cruelty of his Brethren in making Merchandize of him to the Ishmalites, he could say, *It was not you that sent me hither, but God, &c.* As for you, ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass as it is this day, to save much people alive. He insinuates to them, that they had no cause to fear his revenging himself on them; for that he could easily pardon that offence of theirs, out of which God hath drawn so much good to his people, and so much glory to his own Name. How silent would we be, yea, how full of praises, if by an eye of faith we did see the end of God in all his Providences, that they lead to holiness: *Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now I keep thy Word: I know O Lord, that thy judgements are right, and that thou hast afflicted me in faithfulness.* He for our Profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Can we fume at the Physician for prescribing a dyet, or bitter pills and potions, if he provides these for the purging away diseases, that threaten our ruine? Shall we fly in the face of him that binds us, in order to the Saving us? and yet what murmurings have we, whilst in the hands of the Physician? *The folly of a man perverteth his wyes, and his*

Gen. 45.8.
50.20.

Psal. 119.
67, 75.

He. 12. 10.

Prov. 19.3.

heart fretteth against the Lord. How should we honour God, if we did believe, that *his hand our breath is?*

And care-
lessness to
please
God.

Dan. 5. 23.

How careful are we to please them that have power over our lives, and to whom we are beholding for every breath we breathe? O! study how much you labour to comply with men, and how little with the Lord, and you will find your distrust of Providence that you do not believe, that *God fitteth up the floods.*

Justifying
their ac-
tions and
states by
Provi-
dence.

3. *How oft have we made Providence an argument to justify our actions and states?* The reason is, because God doth not punish us, but tolerates us, therefore he loves us, and approves our way? Whereas the Scriptures and Experience shew, that *there is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that prolongs his life in wickedness.* The Lord sometimes puts his Hogs into the fattest pastures, in order to the Slaughter; yea, sometimes his not punishing, is the greatest punishment. *I will not punish*

Hos. 4. 14.

Daughters for their Whoredoms: God will punish Adulterers and Adulteresses to prosper and thrive. Hierom observes, that God deals with us, as Parents with Children, when there is any hope of reclaiming them, they are corrected; but otherwise they are left alone, to do as they list: Or as Physicians continue their applications, whilst there is any hope of the Patients life; otherwise they leave them alone. How do some bless themselves that they never fasted and prayed as oth-

*Ve illis ad
quorum pec-
cata conu-
et Deus.
Luth.*

and yet they ride on horſeback, whileſt others
 ſoot it out : But what ſaith *Hierome* to theſe?
Quando videris, &c. "When thou ſeeſt a
 " ſinner flow with wealth, and braving of
 " his power : when thou ſeeſt him very
 " healthful, and to have a company of brave
 " Children bravely arrayed ; then ſay, the
 " threatning of God, by the Prophet *Hoſeab*,
 " is fulfilled upon that man. *Dives had his*
good things here, and Lazarus evil : Dives fa-
red deliciously every day, his miſery is reſer-
ved to hereafter, as Lazarus his comforts are
reſerved till death. Mark the perfect man, Pſal. 37.
and behold the upright, for the end of that man
is peace. i. e. a confluence of all good.
 What ſaid one of the late *Engliſh* Biſhops?
 "It is the common lot of the true Children
 " of God, becauſe they have many out-fly-
 " ings, wherewith their holy Father is not
 " well pleaſed, to come under the ſcourge
 " oftner than the Baſtards do. If they do
 " amiſs, they muſt ſmart for it either here or
 " hereafter : now God meaneth them *no con-*
 " *demnation hereafter, and therefore he giv-*
 " *eth them more chaſtning here.* It is a con- I Cor. II.
 ſiderable paſſage of a very learned man, in 32.
 weakning the late poſition of ſome, *that*
God had born Teſtimony to their cauſe, by the
many Victories which he had given them, ſaith
 he, "This concluding of yours will by the
 " ſame reaſon infer that *Chriſtianity* is not,
 " and that *Mahumetiſme* is the true Religion;
 " becauſe when the *Turks* aſſerted one, and
 " the *Greek-Church* the other, and that diſ-

ference

"serence begat a War betwixt them;
 "clear that the *Turks* were successful,
 "the *Greek-Church* was sadly wasted
 "subdued by them, and so remains to
 "hour in that unreturned Captivity.

Ecclef. 9. 2. *not all things come alike to all ? And yet*
 men, some of the best that ever breath
 have been stumbled at these dispensations

Jer. 21. 1. "Lord (saith the Prophet *Jeremiah*)
 "art righteous, yet let me reason with thee
 "Why doth the way of the Wicked prosper
 "Thou art of purer Eyes, (saith the Prophet

Hab. 1. 13. "*Habakkuk*) than to behold evil, and
 "not look on iniquity : Wherefore look

"thou upon them that deal treacherously,
 "holdest thy tongue, when the Wicked

"voureth the man that is more righteous than

"he ? The Saints also of the New Testa-

ment were apt to stumble at the Cross,

Gods Providences towards his Saints and

avourites, that they should suffer such

things : so that the Apostles were forced

counsel them, and to rectifie their thoughts

in this particular ; My Brethren think it

strange concerning the fiery trial : And the

Apostle Paul sent Timothy on purpose to

fort them, and to establish them, that

man should be moved by these afflictions :

our Lord himself knowing how apt his Dis-

ples were to stumble hereat, preacheth

purpose on this subject. These things have

spoken unto you, that ye be not offended : What

things were these ? They shall put you out of

the Synagogues (excommunicate you,

1 Pet. 4. 12.

1 Thes. 3.

3, 4.

you out like dogs:) *Yea the time shall come, that whosoever killeth you will think he doth God service.* Good men, when they see the wicked thus *walk on every side* (go where they please, and do what they please) they are apt, either to doubt of Gods Providence, Whether he governs the World, or to call in question whether they have any relation to Gods special care. But do not we know that the Child is oft beaten, whilst the Servant or stranger is spared ? Do not we know that judgement begins at the House of God, yea, and stays long there, and all that while the tents of ungodliness may be free : these may wash their steps in butter, and the Rocks may pour them out Rivers of Oyle : they may wax old and grow in wealth ; their seed may be established : the Rod of God may not be upon them : they may rejoice in the sound of the Organ, &c. and yet wicked enough : All this they may have with the Curse of God, for they say unto God depart, &c.

I Pet. 4. 17.

Job 21. 7. ad 15.

4. *How oft have the generation of the. Just been censured for Hypocrites and ungodly, meerly because of outward Providences ? Thus was Job censured by good men ; because he sate on the Dunghil, who was wont to sit with Princes. Let a man be under grievous losses by Sea, or by Land, yea let but a Viper hang upon the hand, and what then ? This man. (say they) surely is a murderer, who though he hath escaped the Seas, yet vengeance suffereth not to live : Mens outward conditions is made by Barbarians, yea by Christians, the line to*

Censuring others and themselves upon the account of outward Providences.

Acts 23.

mea-

measure Mens relation to God by, they pretend love by prosperity, and hatred by adversity: whereas the Lord tells us that *many tribulations we must enter into the dome of Heaven.* I wonder not at this,

I consider, that *the Servant is not above* *Isa. 53. 3. 4.* *Master: When Christ was a man of sorrows, they did judge him smitten of God.* How ready also are we to say this is a just Judgment of God upon such a suffering Prophet for ———? Yea we censure our selves Hypocrites, when God crosseth us in our earthly comforts, and designs. If a Child &c, then we question the root of the matter whether there be a spark of grace.

Making
Providence
an hinder-
ance to
depending
on God.

5. *The more Providence hath favoured have not we the less roled our selves on the Commandment of grace? Hath not God had the less our dependance and faith? Have not our promises lain more neglected, so that God hath been even necessitated to draw in the hand of bounty, that, like the Widow, we destitute, we may trust to him? The Cistern leak apace, that the Fountain may be in great request.*

Being dis-
contented
with Pro-
vidence.

6. *How discontented are we to this day with Gods Providential administrations towards us? How do we prescribe to God? Some will be richer than they are; others more honorable: Some covet to be above others. Some have bad memories, or else we cannot remember how ill some of us improved our talents of power and honour, when we had them. Is it reasonable that God should charge*

they charged for an hard Master for not entrusting
by talents in our hands, when we have been
unfaithful to our former allotments? Je-
run-like we waxed fat, and never were more
soft-like, than when we were in the greenest
pastures. God would be charg'd even with
discretion, if he should commit ten talents
again to thee, till thou art humbled for thy
former unfaithfulness.

7. *How do we take Gods work out of his hands?*
How careful are we in many things, though
we should be careful in nothing? Though we
cannot add one Cubit to our Stature by all our
labours; yet what sollicitudes eat into our
hearts, and cut them in twain? We should
trust Providence in the use of means, but should
have nothing to do with the issues and events of
the means we use, but leave them to God.
That which is not under our Power, should not
be under our Care. All things are ordered by
the deliberate Counsel of God. *I returned,*
and saw under the Sun, that the race is not to the
swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet
victory to the wise, nor yet riches to men of under-
standing, nor yet favour to men of skill, but time
and chance happeneth to them all.

Taking
Gods work
out of his
hands.

Eccles. 9.
11.

8. *How do rotten-hearted Hypocrites distast*
God, grow careless of serving God, yea fall in-
to an abhorrence of Religion because of Gods
frowning upon his people in Providential dispen-
sations? Hence innumerable sorts of these
hollow-hearted Professours, desert their for-
mer Profession: when the Wind and Tide of
Preference is against them, they will not ha-
zard

Distasting
Religion
because of
adversity.

2 Kings 6.
33.

Neglecting
Provi-
dence, and
shifting for
themselves.

Jer. 18. 11.

v. 12.

zard their outward comforts, for all the
mises of the Gospel : whilest they see how
the Providence favours the Saints as to
comforts of this life, and that Providence
suits not their desires, they rage and
and are ready to cry out, like that wretch
King, *This evil is of the Lord, wherefore
I wait on the Lord any longer ?* Now Fare
to God, Farewell to Profession : if when
Children ask bread, he gives them stones, Fare
to such a Father.

9. *How commonly do men neglect the Provi-
dence of God, and betake themselves to
own shifts to extricate themselves from their
series ? Is man wiser than God ? And yet
hope rather to help themselves by their
wits, wiles, and endeavours, than by leaning
to the Providence of God. Such there was
in Jeremiah's time : God had told them
he had brought them into straits on pur-
pose to engage them to repent of their
and to turn to the Lord : Thus saith the Lord
behold I frame evil against you, and devise
device against you : return ye now every
from his evil way, and make your ways
doings good ; But they loved not humble
work ; And they said there is no hope, but
will walk after our own devices, and we
every one do the imagination of his own
heart : They had devices of their own,
as God approved not : And have not
(some of us) had such ? Hath there not been
devising how to sow discords between su-
periors and inferiours, betwixt Magistrates*

people? Hath there not been *stumbling in our
ways from the ancient paths in a way not cast up,* v. 15.
in an untrodden way? O! how have men run
to extraordinary courses to deliver themselves
out of their miseries? For this, God may make
our land *desolate and a perpetual hissing,* or deri-
sion: he may justly scatter us *as with an East* v. 16.
wind before the Enemy, and shew us the back and v. 17.
not the face in the day of our calamity.

10. *Have not we been partial in viewing the
Providences of God? Have not we taken some* Being par-
one Providence, and fixed our eye upon it tial in
so long, till our hearts have been ever over- viewing
whelmed with sorrow? But we have not Provi-
viewed the Providences of God in their con- dence.
texture, nor in their relation to gracious ends
for our good: sometimes more notice of smil-
ing Providences than of frowning, of what
in Providence makes for them, and their
courses, than of what makes against them:
but others take more notice of frowning Pro-
vidences than of smiling, of what makes
against them, than of what makes for them.
In this we have shewn our selves fools; for
who is wise shall understand these things: These Hol. 14. 9.
words are restrictive: Who? That is few or
none are such, and then there is an earnest
wish or desire of the Prophet, O that men
were wise to understand these things: the
ways of the Lord are right, though men think
them not so.



CHAP. XVIII.

Their Hypocrisie.

Professors
Hypocrisie.

- 11ly. **H**ypocrisie is another piece of Ungodliness, which like leaven, hath diffused it self through the whole body of Professours. It is the greatest ungodliness, that can be, to the Lord of his dominion over the Conscience, and therefore Hypocrisie is called Blasphemy.
- Rev. 2. 9. *know the blasphemy of them that say they are Jews and are not. God is not honoured unless he be acknowledged as the supreme Authority, not only over the life, but the heart; and therefore his Authority is never more undetermined*
- 2 Tim. 3. 5. *than by a meer form of godliness. Hypocrites are clouds without rain, wells without water, trees without fruit, though not without leaves: Yet (to use Christs similitude) they are garnished like tombs: they appear to be one thing, but are another thing: they appear to be the great Worshippers of God; but are the great dishonourers of God: They profess that they love (worship) God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and dis-obedient, and so every good work reprobate. The Hypocrites piety is not piety, his religion is not religion; but do*
- Abscondit quod est, quod non est mentitur.*
Bern.
- Tit. 1. 16.

bled and trebled iniquity. Should not this make us to tremble at the greatness of the hypocrisy of this age? O! How many *Apothecaries boxes* are there, that have *golden titles* and *nothing* in them? How many *curious pictures* drawn to life; but look behind them, and there is nothing but dust and cobweb? How many have glorious *signs*, but within ill customs: an *Angel* for a sign, a *Lamb* for a sign, but within are *Devils* and *Cheats*?

Quis non irascatur videns homines, ore Deum confitentes, negantes moribus? Seculum verbis, & non factis renunciantes?
Aug.

How many have taken up Religion under pretence of its being an help to Heaven, when they have made it a means to get earth, to get custom, credit, &c. Hence when they cannot compass, but rather obstruct their worldly designs, Farewell to Religion: if it contribute not to their private ends, they give it up again. O! How few have embraced Christ and Truth, for Christs sake, for Truths sake? Have not most embraced Christ and his Gospel, as they have Servants, for what they can do for them? and adhered to Profession as the Ivy to the Tree, not because it loves it, but sucks from it, and is succoured by it? Have they not alwayes worshipped the rising, and not the declining Sun? How few own the declining sinking cause of Christ? how hard is it to perswade men to stand for truths, that stand not with their advancements and accommodations? hence many now stand idle, as the people in the Market place, who would not go into the Vineyard, till they were hired. How few will own any way to

Evidenced in their Professing.

be Christs, till they see how it stands with their secular advantages? How many New-
ters now, who once were forward Professors? *If we entertain him* (say they) *the Romans will come, and take away our place and Nation.* We find the truth of a learned mans Assertion; *He that will serve God for the world will serve the Devil for the world: He that serves God for a little, will serve the Devil for more: where he can mend his wages, he will give his service.* How many Professors have with Absolon gone to Hebron to worship, but all the while have promoted their own ambitious designs, raising even sedition in order to their earthly advantages?

Speaking
to God.

Pla. 58. 4.

In how many hath the tongue prayed, when not the heart? These have been much in fasting and prayer, and have thought themselves much wronged that they were not heard: but God gives them a reason: *Ye fast not fast as ye do to make your voice to be heard on high.* The Hypocrite may lift up his voice strongly, and yet never be heard: his voice for want of the heart therein may never come up to Gods dwelling place: his Prayers many times fall back upon his own face, like spittle against the wind. How many have used Prayer as an *hook* to draw in outwards from God and Man; but not as a *sword* to destroy their lusts? How many have cried vehemently unto God for assistances in their doties, chiefly, if not solely, to get themselves a Name in the Earth? How many tell God with a brazen face that they love him, yet

that

that they love him with all their hearts, whereas they love not God, but Gods, somewhat of God : they flatter God with their lips; they delight not in his presence: yea, all the while they are serving their turn on God? Fain they would partake of Gods bounty, of Gods protection, and Gods pardons, but they love neither God nor his Image : when God puts them to express their love by self-denial, then you shall see the graves to be full of rottenness; they hate to spend and to be spent for God. How many tell God that they are troubled for offending him, when they are only troubled that he is displeasing them, and about to correct them for their abuses of him? They will cry out in Prayer, O my carelessness! &c. But alas! It is not Sin, but the Judgements of God, and the consequents of Sin that disturb them. How many will tell God twenty times over they are ashamed of their Sins, and within one hour after they are not ashamed to commit them again, no more ashamed are they, than the Sow is to lye tumbling in the Mire? How will many tell God they fear him, and his Judgements, when in deed and in truth they fear neither, witness their frothy loose spirits and conversations? How will they tell God that all the world is but as a drop of a bucket in comparison of his Majesty, and that all flesh is contemptible, when weighed with him, and yet they fear the wrath of Man more than the wrath of the Almighty God? How many will tell God that they are contented

with all his will, and yet their hearts are full of inward risings against the Providence of God? How many tell God they believe in him, trust to his Mercy, depend on Christ, and O! forsooth all their cares are cast on Christ when God knows, their care and work, like Bees, is to get honey to their hives? They *mind earthly things*, and are scraping the dross of the Valleys to themselves, as if they thought it their wisdom rather to lean on their own providing, than to be beholden to the Lord and dye beggars? How earnest are some in their cries to God for victory over Sin; but secretly hate it not? And does it not appear in this, for that having directed their Prayers to the Lord, they do not look up, to see whether the corruption be more mortified, and their love to it abated yea or no?

To men;
concerning
things.

How have the speeches of many in their converse one with another bewrayed their hypocrisie? How do many covet mightily to insist on the refinements of hypocrites, and thereby they escape (as they hope at least) from being judged such themselves? How have some studied to disgrace Sin to the utmost, and yet secretly cherished that, which they laboured to make odious to others? In company they cry down self-love, hypocrisie, formality, earthliness, and pride, but privately they keep up these, and make them their companions. How zealous have some been in discourse for the Protestant Faith? How have they cryed out against errors, and for

a reformation ; but can tell no more of a work of God upon the heart than an Heathen? How have some contended for opinions, and have put a *jus divinum* upon such and such a way, and counted others as little better than Pagans, that would not submit to their way, and yet by fear and flattery have soon faced about.

How will some cry up such and such for most eminent in grace ? and O how do they love them ! when all the while self-love acts them , and if they gain not by them, they will surely have an howbeit to blot them ? They are as the foreman to praise the rich , from whom they hope to squeeze some of their gold ; but bring up the rear, are the last to commend them, from whom they expect nothing of advantage by their glavering tongue. How much Hypocrisie hath appeared in our declaimings against others sins ? O ! we must not suffer this : the House of God must be kept clean : it must not be made a Den of Thieves, an Hogs-sty, a cage of uncleanness : and all this while their zeal is nothing but revenge ; a secret grudge there is against the Delinquent, and now that an advantage offereth, they will have their pennyworth out of him.

How many are alwayes finding faults, blaming Magistrates, Ministers , all but themselves ? This man wants courage, and another wants another grace, whilst they themselves want all grace, as being meer pieces of pagantry. How many whining Hypocrites

Persons;
Others.

Themselves.

have we, that will in all companies, especially where Ministers are, be crying against the baseness and treachery of their own hearts, and the wickedness of their own lives, and rest in their lazy complaints, but reform not?

Censuring.

Mat. 7. 3.

How severe are some in their censures sin in others, as *Judah* against *Thamar*, must be burnt? who will now suspect *Judah* to be unclean? How ready have we been to judge and censure others, rather than to search ourselves? To behold a *mote* in others, but not the *beam* in our selves? How many censure Ministers for too seldom preaching in private, and yet are themselves Sermon-gluttons; as yet they have not got a stomach, so great was their surfeit with the former plenty; yet when they have Sermons, neglect them; and if they attend with their Bodies on them, yet have no fellowship with Christ in them? We are just like Consumption people, apt to be angry, and fret, if we have not our wonted meals, and the Cooks are blamed for negligence; and when the meat is brought before us, we are even weary of the smell of it. How many censure others for being too talkative, and therefore would impose silence upon others, because they have neither heart nor tongue, to vindicate God, and to promote Religion?

Acting, better abroad, than at home, in publick than in secret duties.

How many are full of persuasions of the love of God, and of the grace of God, and yet ignorant of the first Principles of Christianity; neglecters of Family-Prayer, and

set-Duties? They think well of themselves, because in their Duties before men they are devout and zealous, and carried forth to the wasting of much time; but in their Closets they are straightned, and put the Lord off with a short Collect. How many, like your City Maids, go in their best, are neat, cleanly, and in gorgeous apparel, when walking in the views of others; but if you follow them home to their houses and chambers, how nasty, how foul are they? How many are there whose Religion lies in their face, habit, gesture: seem demure, humble; walk with their eyes looking downwards, bow with *Abolon* to the people, and yet their hearts full of pride and loftiness? How oft even on Fast-dayes have you had sour faces, and inwardly light, frothy und unserious hearts? As an evidence observe when the day ends, *the Dog returns to his vomit*, the heart becomes vain, or rather, the vanity that was smothered and pent up in the day breaks out as soon as the duties are over: We can *hang down our heads like a bull-rush*, we can rough cast our faces, but it is hardly for a day.

How hath Hypocrisie followed thee from the corners of the streets to the very closet? Thou hast shut thy door, as if thou wouldst shut out World and Devils, and there hast fal'n asleep, or (which is as bad) hast parlied with the Devil, and pampered thy lusts: Hypocrisie, like the Frogs of Egypt, hath crept into thy most secret retirements.

Seeming
to be more
in secret
duties than
they are.

Being not
universally
obedient.
Psal. 119. 6.

How few can pretend to *Uniformity* in obedience? How many will be *ashamed*, cause they *respect* not *all Gods Commandments*? Still they clip the Law: still some serves: they will let go profaneness, so they may but reserve covetousness: they will not hear, &c. so they may cheat their Neighbour under a demure behaviour: or they will be strict to the rules of Justice and equity among men: but they will rob God of his honour. Some of them are punctual to a day, to a thing (Blush, Reader, if thou art short of the Hypocrites stature) they will not cheat you with a brass Shilling; but rob God of his due, of his due in the Closet, and in the Family too.

Desiring
to know
the least
degree of
saving
grace.

How frequently do we hear some desire to know the least measure of saving Grace and why? because they would sit down there with. There is not a surer note of an unsound heart, than to be contented with the least degree of grace, and not to press forward.

But not
to be ex-
amined
nor to
consult
with Mini-
sters a-
bout their
condition,
much less
to follow
their di-
rections.

How generally do men hate to be examined and tryed about their state? This is a sure sign of a rotten heart, of a painted-Christians paint will not endure the fire: Hypocrites hate lancing and piercing work. How many continue in a course of Religion, and yet their hearts are hardened more and more, till they know it, and yet will hardly consult with Ministers about their sad condition? if they do, yet practise nothing more than before? I am confident there are many who

make it their buſineſs to keep up their reputation among the Saints, but have loſt (and know they have) their credit at the throne of grace; and though they have their reward, the Saints embrace them for Precious, yet Chriſt neglects them, and when they ſpread out their hands all the day long to the Heavens, they have no welcome with God. To what purpose is the multitude of your Sacrifices *Iſa. i. 11.* unto me, ſaith the Lord, I am full of the burnt offerings of the Rams, and the fat of ſed beaſts, and I delight not in the blood of Bullocks, or of Lambs, or of He-goats. And when you *v. 15.* ſpread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea when you make many Prayers, I will not hear.

O! What a Controverſie hath God with England for its great Hypocriſie? We have called our ſelves of the holy City, and have made mention of the God of Iſrael, but not in truth, not in righteouſneſſ. Though you have paſt for Saints in the account of blind, and ſhort-ſighted men; yet you are but Devils in Chriſts account: So was the arch-Hypocrite Judas, One of you is a Devi!. Of all Devils, none ſo bad as the Proſſing Devil. Remember the vengeance which fell on Belſhazzar, when he carouzed in the Bowls of the Sanctuary. Their damnation ſlumbreth *2 Pet. 2. 3.* not, who through covetouſneſs make uſe of the covering of ſaigned words. O! When will ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteouſneſſ, and True holineſſ? *Eph. 4. 24.* Believe it, if thou art a whited wall God will ſmite

smite thee. Though thou get some pre-
 glory or profit by thy outside holiness,
 God more abhors thee, than the blest
 imperfect observing World can applaud thee.
 Will a King indure it, that thou take
 Robes, and cloath a Swine with them;
 that thou take his Crown and set it on
 head of a base Varlet? *God is coming against*
the Hypocritical Nation. And he accounts
 a disgrace, for thee to voice thy self to be
 Son of so great a Prince, whilest thou art
 Slave to Hellish lusts. All you do for God
 will not profit you, *you lose all you have*
wrought, whilest acted by self, and corrupted
 your ends and aims. Though you trust in
ing words, in your outward shews, yet I
 Jer. 7. 8. *declare thy righteousness, and thy words,*
 Isa. 57. 12. *they shall not profit thee.* What shall I say
 There is no acceptance for you to be heard
 without the Benjamin of sincerity with you. A
 day of trouble is hastning, and you think
 Job 27. 9. *then to pray, but will God hear your cry when*
trouble cometh upon you? If you deny God
 Psal. 106. *your heart, never expect his ear.* *Quia*
 15. *you may have, but with a vengeance, with*
leanness in your souls. That which God desires
 Psal. 51. 6. *and looketh for, is truth in the inward part.*
 God and Religion have received so much dis-
 honour by pretenders to Christ and Truth,
 and so many Atheists have been made, con-
 firmed, and hardned in England, by the
 Observations they have made on Professions
 hypocritical pretensions, that I fear the stain
 will hardly be washed away without blood,
 and

and some probably will be called forth to seal to the Truth of Christ by their death, to convince men, that there are some real Christians, who will spend, and be spent for Christ; and that whilest many have but a *Name to live*, yet there are a few in our *Sardin*, who are not defiled with hellish Hypocrisie, but love Truth in their inward parts.



CHAP. XIX.

Their Sabbath-Sins.

Lastly, **W**Hen you remember the evil of your ways, of your ungodly ways, you may not omit your Sabbath-Sins. God hath appointed the Sabbath: He hath sanctified it for special and entire communion with himself. The Law of the Sabbath was given before the Fall; because man was to labour and dress the Garden on the six dayes, and therefore could not have that compleat and undistracted communion with God, even in his estate of innocency, which he might enjoy by a total separation from all earthly and heterogeneous employments: But since the Fall, this Rest is of more absolute necessity; for that we cannot now apply our minds

Professors
Sabbath-
Sins.
en-

entirely to matters of so different a nature heavenly and earthly things are. The Sabbath is many wayes honourable : it was evidently set apart by God ; it was written with Gods own finger in the Tables ; God rained Mannah on that day ; it's called an *Everlasting Covenant*, by way of eminency, as if nothing of Gods Covenant were kept, if they were not : Yea, God puts a *Remember* on this day, and no other : *Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day.* " If a Friend sendeth to you, that he will come and seek himself in your company such a day, and tells you the set time, when he will come, will he not take it ill, if you neglect him then ? If you are full of employments, and other guests, and have no leisure to attend communion with him ? Thus saith, God, " Remember such a time, I will set it apart on purpose to enjoy you, and feast you ; I will then take you into my Cellars, my Wine-Cellars, and (after an holy manner) inebriate you with Divine comforts : You are on your other dayes clogg'd and cumbered with earthly affairs, so that I can have therein but broken communion with you ; but pray *Remember* to lay aside all other business, to rest from all your other works, that I and you may freely converse together. But instead of this,

Their not
preparing
for it.

How little *Preparation* do we make for the observing of this day unto the Lord ; Though *Remember* be a Watch-word of solemn Preparation for it ? *Remember it*, think of it before

fore it come, that so thou maist be ready to sanctifie it, without any distraction by worldly business. Which of us dispatcheth his worldly business seasonably on the six dayes? Nay, is it not a wicked custome, to engross more business into our hands and hearts the day before, than on any other day of the Week? Do not greedy Professours sit up later on *Saturday* Night, than any other Night? Hereby their hearts are cumbred with the World, and their natural strength and spirits wasted and spent, so that they cannot with a free Spirit wait upon God. Such is the reverence that is due to the solemn and publick Duties of Devotion, that they require, not only a surcease from other works and thoughts, for the time of the performance; but also a decent preparation before-hand, that we *look to our feet*, &c. that so our thoughts and affections, which are naturally bent upon the World, and not easily withdrawn from it, may be raised to a disposition becoming the day. God alone knows, how oft the Devil, and our own hearts, have intangled us with occasions on the *Saturday*, whereby our minds have been distracted on the Sabbath: Yea, have we not at times even secretly wished, that the Sabbath were over, or might be adjourned, that we might pursue some worldly design, which is obstructed by its interposal? The Sabbath is the Saints Market-day, or Fair-day: You know what preparations are made by Worldlings for their dayes of gain; would to God we

we had learned wisdom from carnal men, to fit and prepare for the advantages to Souls we may reap upon Gods day.

Their cur-
tailing it.

Amos 8. 4.

How have we curtailed the Sabbath? But not we risen later on the Lords day than any other? and gone sooner to bed on the day than on any other? *When will the Sabbath be gone?* Do not we make it the shortest of the Week? O! If God had reserved the dayes to himself save one, how diligent would you have been, to take all the day for your worldly business? This is a clear evidence, that your minds are more on your Profits and Pleasures, than on the Service of Christ.

Being sad
when the
Sabbath
begins, and
glad when
it ends.

How lowring are our countenances, how lumpish and heavy are our hearts, in the beginning of a Sabbath, much more than upon any other day? Doth not this prove the day to be no way pleasing to us? And how cheerful are some of us, when the Sabbath is ended? The heart is not so well pleased all the day, as then: yea do not some cheat and delude themselves hereby, as if they had joy in the Lord, and had received comfort from the Word and other Ordinances; whereas they are glad that the yoke of Ordinances, the burden of the Word of the Lord, and the burden of the day of the Lord is taking off their Shoulders?

Being hindered from
profaning
it only by
external
motives.

How many are there, who would profane Gods Sabbaths and wholly neglect the Ordinances of them, were it not for the Laws of men, and the eyes of their Relations?

How

How quieted are ſome when they have attended the publick ſervice? and do they be-
wixt and after thoſe ſolemn duties refrain
their lips from worldly talk, from imperti-
nencies, from ſuch diſcourſe, as bears no
proportion with the holineſſ of the day?

When works of Neceſſity and Charity hap-
pen out beyond our expectation or forecaſt,
are we (at all) troubled at them? Do not
we rather rejoice, becauſe we have thereby
a diſpenſation to withdraw from the immedi-
ate worſhip of God? And how many neglect
to do all their works on the ſix dayes, though
the Lord ſo expreſſly chargeth them ſo to do,
that they may have a pretence of neceſſity to
do much ſervile work on the Sabbath? How
common is it to dreſſ meat on the Sabbath,
more than on any other day, when there is not
the leaſt preſence of weakneſſ, &c. Hereby
not only Servants, but the whole houſe are too
much in labour and diſtraction, and hindred
(if not from the ſolemn Aſſemblies, yet) from
Family, and Cloſet worſhip.

How do many goſſip, complement, and feaſt
away (abroad) the day of the Lord? or elſe
eat to an exceſſ at home, and thereby make
themſelves fitter for a bed, than to wait on
the Sanctuary, to hear Chriſts voice, to me-
ditate on his love, and to feed in his pleaſant
paſtures.

How careful are we to keep our ſelves,
and ours, from pilſering from our Neigh-
bour; but not from ſtealing from God his
time? yea are not ſome Governours ſo un-
godly

Satisfied
with wor-
ſhipping
God pub-
lickly.

Glad to be
hindred
from works
of piety.

Exod. 20.9.

Eating too
much on
the Sab-
bath.

Stealing
Gods time.

godly, unmerciful, that they will allow the people no time but the Sabbath to recover themselves from their labours? If they have no recreation, you have more time than God has reserved, sure you should not steal from God to pleasure them.

Not performing duties of mercy aright.

In the discharge of the works of mercy Man and Beast, Do not we respect more our own commodity, than the will of God, the dispensation of God, and the creature's necessities? Are these works of mercy attended with such spiritual meditations, as they afford us, if our hearts were holy?

Not blessing of God for the Sabbath.

How few bless God for giving them a day, wherein they may lighten their hearts from all worldly cares, and throw off all griefs and secular cumbers, and may seek for relief and comfort in their God?

Careless whether those under them observe the Sabbath.

Perhaps the Master observes a day unto the Lord; but how careless is he, that his Sons and Daughters, and all within his gate honour the day of the Lord? Do not many Professing Governours of Families let them sleep away the Sabbath, that they may be the fitter for their drudgeries the following week? Or when will Governours be as diligent, that their Servants and Household serve the Lord, as that they serve themselves? You have been carefull that your work were done on the week; but careless whether Gods work were done by them on the Sabbath: careless whether your Servants profited by the Sabbath or no? When will Gods glory and the good of your peoples Souls be nearer to you than

your
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your worldly advantages? You ask your Servants, what work they have done for you every day, and call them to frequent accounts for your gains-sake, and what? never reckon with them about their Spiritual Soul-work? O! how little is the love of God shed abroad in your hearts?

How justly may God be angry with us, till he hath consumed us, for our defiling the day of the Lord? It was Gods express Law, that every one that defileth it should surely be put to death. *Exod. 31. 14.*

When the people were weary of the Sabbath, when they said, *When will the new Moon be gone that we may sell corn? and the Sabbath that we may set forth wheat, &c.* The Lord *Amos 8. 5.*

swore by the excellency of Jacob, Surely I will never forget any of their works. Shall not the *V. 7.*

Land tremble for this, and every one mourn that dwelleth therein? and it shall rise up wholly as a flood, and it shall be cast out and drowned, as by the flood of Egypt. And it shall come to pass *V. 9.*

in that day, saith the Lord God, that I will cause the Sun to go down at Noon, and I will darken the Earth in the clear day. And I will *V. 10.*

turn your Feasts into mourning, and all your Songs into lamentation, &c. Behold the dayes *V. 11.*

come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a Famine in the Land, not a Famine of Bread, nor a thirst for Water, but of bearing of the Word of the Lord. And they shall wander from Sea *V. 12.*

to Sea, and from the North even to the East, they shall run to and fro to seek the Word of the Lord, and shall not find it.



CHAP. XX.

Their miscarriages about Heart-examination.

Professors
miscarria-
ges about
Self-exa-
mination.

2 Cor. 13.
5.

THe more that the Lord of Heaven charg-
eth us with a Duty, the more inexcusa-
ble are our neglects of it : There are few
things more commanded us, than to try and
examine our hearts and lives : *Examine your
selves, &c. Prove your selves, &c.* We are apt to be
strangers to our selves, to cheat our selves with
vain presumptuous hopes, to rest in notions ;
therefore *ἐαυτοὺς πειράζετε*; *Examine your selves*,
take an *experimental* knowledge of your
selves: We are apt to prove others, and con-
fute them; therefore *ἐαυτοὺς δοκιμάζετε*, *Prove
your own selves*, begin at home, try your
state, try your actions, bring the mettall to
the touchstone, see whether it be sound or
counterfeit; try your Faith, whether it be
temporary or saving; prove your Repentance,
whether it be through or superficial; examine
your Love, whether it be sincere or hypocriti-
cal; and your Obedience, whether it be uni-
versal or partial. *Know therefore, and confi-
der it in thine heart, make a return or answer*

Deut. 4:39.

to thine heart. *Commune with thine own heart,* hold intelligence with it. *Let a man examine himself.* *Let us search and try our ways.* But yet notwithstanding these Injunctions,

1. *How many are there, that never set about this Duty?* They will Pray, &c. but will not be perswaded to look inward: They are as great strangers to their own, as to others hearts. They are at no pains, to try in what state they are: They will not try, whether they are new-born, or not; whether sanctified, or not; whether a saving change hath past upon them, or not: They will not compare themselves with the Characters, which are given by Ministers and Books, to see whether they be in the gall of bitterness, or not, in the bond of iniquity, or not: They never examine what Justification, and justifying and saving Faith be, and whether they are justified, and shall be saved, like *Gallio*, *Little caring for these things*: They examine which way they may be greater in the World, how to add to the heap, how to load themselves with thick clay, how to escape the wrath of man, how to prolong their dayes; but not how to prepare for Eternity, and how to make sure of Heaven: You ask one another, what news from Navies, from Armies, from Court, from Country; but when did you spend one hour to ask your hearts this serious question, *O my Soul! what will become of thee, when thou leavest this earthly Tabernacle?* We travel any where, but where we should: We are better read in any Book,

Their omitting the Duty altogether.

Not examining their Estates.

than in the *sealed Book* of our own hearts: We are not at all for a *personal treaty* with our own Consciences: We are too much prying into other mens hearts, but our eyes turn not inward: We know not how it is with our souls, and what will become of them, and we have no mind to know such matters.

Nor Actions.

As we commune not with our hearts about our States, so we do not commune with them about our *Actions*, neither *before*, nor *after* the doing of them: Before we act, we do not advise with our Consciences, whether, what we be about to do, be *lawful*, or *unlawful*; and if *lawful*, whether *expedient* or *inexpedient*: After we have acted, whether our actions be *good* or *evil*. How many are contented, so the *matter* be good, but examine not themselves about the *manner*, *principles*, *ends*, and *motives*? Though the Children of *Israel* knew, by the Word of the Lord, and from *Abraham* their Father, that *Canaan* was a *Land flowing with milk and honey*; yet they sent Spies, and searched it, and thereby were confirmed: If men had never so much confidence of the goodness of their Prayers, &c. yet for *Confirmation-sake*, they should send down Spies into their hearts, to see the *Clusters* of their Zeal and Affections, the utmost of the goodness of them. But alas! how many wholly neglect this necessary and possible Duty? If all were like these, God might take up his old complaint, Jer. 8. 6. *No man cryed out, What have I done? Or, O my heart! What hath God done for thee?*

2. How

2. *How backward are a more refined sort of Professors to a compliance with this Duty?* The backwardness of the best hereunto.
How oft have your Ministers invited you, beseeched you, to hold intelligence with your own hearts, and yet cannot prevail? How backward are the best to keep a strict eye upon their little house within, to see what is done within those doors? We are apter to study others lives, yea hearts, than our own. If the best knew, how much work lies within doors, they would not be so much abroad, as they are.

3. *If we do examine our hearts, yet not by the Word of the Lord.* Not making use of the Word as the Rule.
God would have us to try and prove our selves; then there must be some measuring Line, some Standard, some Rule, to try our selves by; but herein we are hugely defective: We try our selves by some sudden pangs, or by the good opinion of others concerning us, or by the lives of others, (we being in an Hospital, where every one almost is lame and defective) or by some other easie Rule, that we our selves frame unto our selves, and so miserably cheat our selves. O! how loth are we, that the light of Gods Word should be let down into the dark Cells of our hearts, for want whereof, there is much dust unobserved, and not swept away? How loth to try states or actions by the Scripture, though thereby they must be tryed at the last day? He is a good Text-man, that compares Scripture with Scripture: and he is a good Christian, that compares the Scripture and his own heart to-

gether, that credits his own heart only, when it hath the consent of the Prophets and Apostles, making them *Umpires* in the decision of all his Soul-controversies. Have recourse to the *Light that shines in a dark place*.

2 Pet. 1. 19. But alas ! Who obeyes *this form of wholesome words* ?

Being superficial therein.

4. *How overly and superficial are many in the examining themselves by the Word ?* How few do examine their *State*, or their *Actions* fully ? Though our hearts be very great

Jer. 17. 9.

Impostors, *deceitful above all things*, great *Swamp-planters*, full of guile ; though there be thousands and thousands of Lusts that lye hid in our hearts, and Deceits like the Sands on the Sea-shoar, yet how carelessly do we set upon this work ? We take no pains in it.

Being too seldom in it.

5. *How seldom are we in this work ?* Some defer it till a Sacrament, and then perhaps the house is searched for the leaven ; whereas we should keep a petty Sessions in our hearts every day, and do what we can to know the bottom of the projects, devices, workings of our hearts. " When going to Prayer, we " should examine our selves ; whether we " have clean hands, and pure hearts, whether " we are double-minded ; if so, there is no " drawing nigh to God : And when we come " off from the Duty, we should confer with " our hearts, what enlargements, quicknings, " meltings, humblings we had in the Duty ; " what promises, what threats were applyed " by the Spirit ; whether we saw the face of " our Beloved, or not ? When going to a Ser-

Jam. 4. 8.

" man,

" *mon*, we should examine in what posture we
 " are to meet with God, what Oyl we want,
 " that we may be supplied? When going to
 " our *Beds*, we should examine our hearts,
 " how the day hath been spent, what sins
 " were committed, *what* Duties, and *how*
 " discharged, what temptations were resisted,
 " what mercies received, and what growth
 " and increase of grace we have obtained?
 " When going to *Visit*, this Duty should be
 " taken up before and after: *Before*, thus,
 " Wherein may I honour the Lord my God in
 " such company? what are their wants, that
 " I may endeavour to supply them? what are
 " their temptations and discouragements,
 " that I may labour to support them? what
 " are their graces and best attainments, that I
 " may profit by them? *After*, thus, O my
 " heart! What good didst thou *do* or *receive*
 " in that company? wast thou *eyes to the*
 " *blind*, *feet to the lame*? didst thou labour to
 " bring thy Friends nearer to Jesus Christ?
 " or hast thou more *estranged* and *prejudiced*
 " them, *from* and *against* the way of truth?
 " O my heart! Didst thou *take heed to thy*
 " *ways*, that thou didst not sin with thy tongue?
 " Didst thou *keep thy mouth as with a bridle*?
 " When going into the *Shop*, or *Field*; yet
 " with *Isaac* thou art to meditate there, and
 " confer with God and thy heart, thus, O
 " my heart! for whom dost thou labour, for
 " *Self*, or for *God*? *Whose* Servant wilt thou
 " be to day, the *Worlds*, or *Christs*? O my
 " heart! How many snares are there in the

"World? What a dirty place is the World?
 "and how great is thy danger, if God pre-
 "vent not by special grace? O my Soul!
 "What need hast thou of Almighty power to
 "keep thee, that thou maist retain thy sweet-
 "ness in salt waters?

But alas! How seldom do we reflect on
 our words, or silence; on our speaking, or
 bearing; on our behaviour abroad, or at home?
 When do we consider, what our affections
 were most set upon, in such and such a place,
 in such an hour; and what our demeanour
 God-ward, and toward our Neighbour, was?
 We do not believe *Bernard*, who tells us,
If we would examine our selves as oft as we need,
we must do it alwayes. And *Chrysostome's* pa-
 raphrase and counsel on *Psalm 4.* is of as lit-
 tle credit with us, *Let this account be kept ev-
 ry day, have a little Book in thy Conscience,*
and write therein thy daily transgressions, and
when thou layest thee down on thy Bed, bring
forth thy Book, and take an account of thy
sins.

Bern. in
Cant.

Growing
 weary of
 the work,
 before
 they have
 brought
 things to
 an issue.

6. Do not we grow weary of this work, be-
 fore it be brought to any considerable Issue? We
 flagg before we come to the up-shot. Still
 some were learning, and never came to the know-
 ledge of the truth: And so some (pretend at
 least to) be alwayes trying; but they hold not
 fast: They try their hearts, as some did truths,
 till they be wholly sceptical, as ignorant whe-
 ther converted, or no, as ever: They know
 not more this year, than they did seven years
 since, but hang betwixt Heaven and Hell, in a
 dubious

dubious state, for want of skill or pains to decide this matter. We are not resolute and peremptory enough to have an account of our Souls, yea such an one, as that we may have boldness in the presence of Christ. When David thought on God, and was troubled, he never gives over his heart, till he ended this controversy : He communed with his heart, and made a diligent search. We should commune, till we know, whether we be natural or spiritual ; and accordingly be humbled greatly, or greatly rejoice in God our Saviour. But alas ! This Age is strangely dull and sluggish : those Duties, that will cost expence of spirits, and call for the labour of the mind, we wholly omit, or do them very negligently. " Reader, Could I but prevail with thee, " to set in good earnest upon Occasional Meditation, and Heart-Examination, and Sollemn Meditation, and Self-Tryal, I should " bless the Lord as long as I breathe for this " enterprise of mine. *The searcher of hearts* " knoweth, that I took Pen in hand on this " design, to labour with thee in order to in- " side Duties, that thou mightest not be con- " tented with a *Form of Godliness*, and rest in " the external part of Religion : that more " work might be done within doors, in *Clas- " sets, and Hearts*. O that you would re- " form ! Not pass on to another Chapter, " till you have engaged your slippery incon- " stant hearts, to attend on this necessary " Duty ! Take a few Considerations to im- " pell you.

Psal. 77.
3, 6.

Motives to
this great
duty, Hea-
thens else
will rise up
in judge-
ment
against us.

1. *The very Heathen will rise up in judgment to condemn you, if you neglect this duty.* A Roman Philosopher every night, before he slept, would examine himself thus, *Quid malum hodie sanasti, &c.* What sin hast thou opposed? wherein art thou bettered? Cato would daily at evening call to mind, what he had seen, read, or done that day. I use (like Seneca every evening) to plead my cause with my self: when the candle is gone, and all silent, I review all that I have said or done in the day. I hide nothing from mine own scrutiny: I pass by nothing. Pythagoras gave also this severe rule to his Scholars, that they should no night suffer sleep to seize their senses, till they had three times recalled the accidents and passages of the day, what evil have I committed? what good have I omitted? Except your Righteousness exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees (saith Christ) (may not I say, of the Heathen) how can you hope for Salvation? O! how hath thine heart cheated thee with vain confidences? How hast thou cryed, the Temple of the Lord: I have Abraham to my Father: whilest mortal Heathens have been better acquainted with their hearts, than thou art?

Sensitive
creatures
will else
shame us.

Yea, 2. *The very sensitive creatures may shame thee into the practice of this duty.* Go thou sluggard to all the souls of Heaven. Do they not sit in the Sun, and view themselves, look inward to themselves, turn every feather to set it at rights? Do they not look over their feathers, and pick out and throw away that

that which is bad, and set others in their place, when misplaced.

Nay, 3. *You your selves will be judges of your selves.* You take the glass, and what is amiss in the hair, in the face, in the body, you rectifie by it : and what ? no observation to be made of the faces of your Souls ? O ! take the word of God ; and make use of this glass, which now is in thine hand : doth it discover no spots, no neglects, no failings ? O ! view thy self, and humble thy self, reflect on thy self, and conferr with thy self, till thou art ashamed, till thou abhorrest and loathest thy self before the Lord.

4. *You have a sure sign of hypocrisie on you,* whilest this duty lies neglected ; for all the upright have been very careful to commune with their hearts, to search their hearts, to make diligent search, lest any lust should be covered ; as Rachel covered her Idols, or as Saul was hid in the stuff. Nothing is more desired by a sincere Soul, than to be thoroughly searched : examine me O Lord, as Artificers do whether their gold be weight or no : and prove me, as Artificers do their silver in the fire : try my reins and my heart, the most inward motions of my Soul : search me more deeply and thoroughly than the world can do. Unsound hearts have one Dalilah, they have one house of Rimmon, that they cannot endure to be examined and sound out : they are loth to search too far, lest they should see what they are unwilling to see, and so be put upon judging and condemning themselves for that

We shall
else be
self-con-
demned.

The neg-
lect of this
duty a sign
of hypo-
crisie.

Psal. 26. 2

that, which they love beyond an Eye, or Hand.

The sad consequences of the neglect of this duty.

5. *O the sad consequences of the neglect of this duty!* By this neglect your hearts will become careless, for that they are not called to an account, as *Servants* and *Factors* will wont, when their Masters neglect to examine them. Hereby *Sins* will grow bold with you, and the more easily beset you for that you examine not wherein their strength lies, and which way they oftneft prevail over you. Hereby the work of *Repentance* will be obstructed; for that innumerable *Sins* which you are daily guilty of, will pass away unobserved, with those circumstances attending them, which make them of the greater magnitude. Hereby your *uncertainties* about your spiritual estate will remain: it may be converted, it may be not, it may be a Son of God, it may be not, but a Child of Hell: it may be a Believer, it may be an Enemy to God, and one of Gods curse. Hence will follow great *dejectedness* under every Providence of God: no condition will please you, whilest doubting and staggering: you will be apt to fear whether your food be in mercy, your dayes in mercy, your liberty, yea the Gospel in mercy to you: you will sink under adversity; for you cannot say, *the Lord is my portion*; you know not whether God will be your strong Tower, Fortress, &c. you cannot manage any duty well, whilest this lies neglected. How can you walk before God with an *umble heart*, when you know not what

Mic. 6. 8.

What your hearts are? How can you serve him
with an upright heart, whilst a stranger to
his duty? The very Heathens knew how ne-
cessary this was to all their duties, and there-
fore discreetly caused to be writ over the
Temple at Delphos, *γνῶθι σεαυτὸν*, *Know thy
self*: Miserable are the disappointments that
will attend English Professours, unless they
fall into a compliance with this duty: you will
be deluded: like the foolish Virgins, you will
not know your undone condition, till it be
too late: you lie deceived in matters of the
greatest and highest concernment: you are
cheated hitherto in things of eternity: you
are vexed, when deceived by a Friend, when
supplanted by a Neighbour: O! how will it
pierce your Souls, to be cheated by your
selves? When we would exclaim against a
Knave, we say, he will cozen his Father;
the nearer the Relation, the more sordid the
Cheat: O! but here is one that lies in thy
bosome, and thou and it, go to cheat each
other continually. *Let no man deceive himself:* 1 Cor 3:
it seems we are apt to do so: But O! how 18.
great will your confusion be when this deceit
shall be manifested, when you shall see your
selves frustrated of all your hopes, and the
glory, your hearts promised you? How will
you be confounded, when you shall say, we
looked for Heaven; but behold Hell: we looked
for Salvation; but behold Destruction: we look-
ed to be made perfectly Happy; but (O how
our hearts have cheated us!) we must be dam-
ned: we thought we had as good hearts as any,

as true Faith, as sound Repentance, as cordial love to God, as any of our Neighbours, as any Precious of the Country : we fools counted their life precious, &c. O ! what daggers and swords will these frustrations be to you ?

We and
our hearts
shall not
always be
strangers.

6. If you be loth to see how it is with you now how will you be able to behold what shall be seen the day of Judgement ? Though you now will not know your hearts ; though you are finally, as not to speak with them, or loth to examine the dirty Corners ; yet God is coming with his Fan : the books must be opened, and every page of thy heart will be unfolded ; for God will bring to light every hidden work of dishonesty : God will pluck off the rough garment, which thou wearest to deceive : thy inward parts, which are very wickedness, shall be made manifest ; and then thou shalt be speech-less, as if thou hadst a muzzle put upon thy mouth, as the word signifieth. Well, seeing murder will out (as we say) the secrets of the Soul must be brought forth, is it not better by judging ourselves by a severe tryal and sentence on ourselves to prevent the wofulness of the last day ? Judged we must, and shall be : is it not then thy wisdom to judge thy self here in thy Closet, that thou maist be judged by God with a judgement of Absolution, and not of Condemnation ? Is it nothing to have all thy unrepented and unforgiven sins published on the house-top, made known to all the World, at the great day ? How will thine heart endure then, when the Lord shall come to deal with thee ?

Ezek. 22.

14.

Isa. 26. 11.

You will not see ; but you shall see : You will not

not retire, the World lyes in your hearts, Bu-
 sines comes in, and takes up all your time and
 spirits: God is about to strip you, to ease
 you of your Callings, you shall come naked to
 the Barr of God, you shall have no Family
 busines to distract you: a *fair tryal* there shall
 be, but a *sad* one for thee; *Your sins shall find* Numb. 32. 23.
you out. You have had many *Calls*: once more
 I call upon you, in the Name of Christ, to
 examine your hearts, by the words of this
 Book, which you have, or shall read: And be
 sure of it, *If you will not try your selves by the*
Word, God will try you by his Works. Thus saith
 the Lord, *I will melt them, and try them:* But Jer. 9. 7.
 how will God melt them, and try them?
 Shall I not visit them for these things, saith the
 Lord: *Shall not my Soul be avenged on such a* v. 9.
Nation as this? For the mountains will I take up
 a weeping and wailing, and for the habitations of
 the wilderness a lamentation; because they are burnt v. 10.
 up, so that none can pass through them, neither can
 men hear the voice of the Cattel, both the Fowl of
 the Heavens, and the Beasts are fled, they are gone.
 And I will make Jerusalem heaps, and a Den of v. 11.
 Dragons; and I will make the Cities of Judah
 desolate, without an Inhabitant.

CHAP.



CHAP. XXI.

Their Pride.

Professors
Pride,
Ezek. 16.
49.
Evidenced
in Irrever-
ence in
addresses
to God.
Gen. 18. 27.

Not stoop-
ing to the
Will of
God.

BEhold, *This was the iniquity of thy Sodom, Pride, &c.* And is not this *Devilish Sin* become our *National Sin*?

1. *With what a bold and impudent face have we come and appeared before God? Who hath sensibly express himself in Abraham's words, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes.* Instead of a reverential fear of God, our behaviour hath been stout against God, and we have not trembled in his presence, no not whilest we have been terribly threatned by God, yea when his dreadful threatnings have been terribly executed upon us: Even in such times we have irreverently rushed into his Presence.

2. *How have our Wills risen up against the Will of God? The humble Soul stoops to Gods Preceptive and Providential Will; but we have wretchedly thwarted God in all his Counsels and Dispensations. The great Controversie betwixt God and man, is, Whose Will shall stand, God or mans? O! How impudently have we contended with the Lord*

about

about this? We have even thought our selves too great to be crost. How many think it even a disgrace to their noble Spirits, to be still and silent, even under the hand of God, but they must be clamorous, and speaking against the very Heavens? They are ready to say, This was not well done by God, he might have given, or continued to us, this and the other mercy: They mislike many of Gods Dispensations of Providence: they cannot heartily say, that *God holds the reins best*, and guides all his affairs with the greatest wisdom: they think if they were the Orderers of matters in the World, things would be better governed: like proud *Absolon*, who wished he were in *Dauids* stead, they wish they were in Gods stead. A proud man would have others under him, yea, he would have the great and glorious God subject to his will, to do what he pleaseth, to yield to his desires. Whence are all your disputings and quarrellings with God, save from the Pride of your hearts? The humble Soul cries, *Not my will, but thine be done. It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.* But so over-grown are we with an opinion of our own wisdom and worth, that we must limit the Holy One, and order him how to rule the World: God must stoop to our prescriptions, or else we swell and break with discontent. "O, Is not God wiser than man? Shall the clay say to the Potter, Why hast thou shaped me thus? Rather let the potshards strive with the potshards (worms with worms) about

“about the preheminance of wills, than
 “contend with God. O! When will you
 “proud hearts stoop to God? when shall
 “his Will be the Rule? when will you
 “willing to be dealt withal as God pleaseth
 “eth?”

Lothness
 that God
 should be
 exalted,
 unless they
 be instru-
 ments and
 sharers.

3. *How loth are we that God should have glory in the World, unless we share in it, or unless we be the immediate instruments of exalting of him? We are willing God should have some glory, so we may share with him: content that Free-will and Free-grace should divide the spoils: the honor of our salvation shall be ascribed, partly to our endeavours, and the honesty of our wills, in choosing the way of life, and partly to Christs merits. We are willing God should be exalted, so it be by our selves, so that we may be famous in promoting the design; else we are discontented. Few are contented that Gods work should be carried on by any hand save their own, that some glory may descend on them. Most are like the proud Senators of Rome, that could have been contented, that Christ should have been numbred among their Gods, but that the Motion began not with themselves. O! Think with your selves, how many good motions, tending to the edification of the body of Christ, have miscarried upon this account, because others should not have the honor of beginning them? Whence can it be, save from the Pride of our hearts, that we have so little rejoyced, when God hath been advanced by others, and we had no hand there-*

in? We are afraid that others glory will eclipse ours.

4. *How scornfully do we look on some of the Lords Commandments?* To reprove Offenders, to visit the Poor, and confer with them, yea, to be seen in the company of poor Christians, is accounted a disgrace; we think it an abasement to our Spirits, and a discredit to us, to be known in any relation to them. Who can bow to the meanest services of the Sanctuary?

Scorning
some Di-
vine
Com-
mands.

5. *How unwilling are we to come to Christ, till we have our double money in our sacks, till we have fitted and prepared our selves, and made our selves worthy of him?* Hence all the offers of Christ are neglected, till the Soul hath wrought it self into a better disposition for Christs embraces and loves; and therefore when we can weep bitterly, and pray fervently, we will come to Christ, but will not be beholding to him to work both to will and to do: We would be the *Alpha*, and he shall be the *Omega*: We would begin some glorious work, and then tye him to our performances, and oblige him by our great and glorious services and reformations: We hate to be *Alms-people*; To begg I am ashamed: We are loth to receive all from God, we would purchase and merit somewhat.

Unwil-
lingness
to come
to Christ,
till worthy
of him.

6. *How Unthankfull are we?* A Proud man is alwayes an Unthankful man, and an Unthankful man is alwayes a Proud man. He thinks he deserves all that is conferred upon him. The humble man counts himself less

Unthank-
fulness.

than the least of all Gods mercies, but the proud man reckoneth all that he enjoyeth little. Do not we think God is beholding us for our Duties and Services, more than we are to him for Life, Breath, and all our Possessions?

Setting
upon great
works in
their own
strength.

7. *Dare we not set upon the biggest Service in our own strength, without calling in the help of the Almighty?* The Proud man seldom believes his own insufficiencies to think a great thought: He can rush upon Prayer, reading the Scriptures, Meditation, and such difficult works of Christianity, without exploring the aid and succours of Heavens influences.

Being hasty
Beggars.

8. *Are we not hasty Beggars?* If we petition for Pardons, or Holiness, and God comes not to the door at the first or second knock, away we are flinging: *There is no hope, why should I wait on the Lord any longer?* We dare prescribe God a day, and by thus limiting God, our Pride appears, as if we knew the fittest seasons for deliverance and mercy. Were we of an humble heart, we would wait all our dayes with patience, yea, we would resolve to be exalting of God, whatever becomes of ourselves, and to pay him the homage of duty, though he for just reasons be pleased to frown upon our Prayers, and to deny us all the requests of our Souls. I hear some say, they would pray, hear, read, wait upon God all their dayes, so they were sure God would accept them, and smile upon them in the last hour: I say to these, you ought

ought to serve God with all your time and strength, you are bound to God in duty, though God were under no obligations by promise unto you. O the Pride of our Spirits! that we dare tell God, We will not serve thee unless thou humour us.

9. *Do not we think God hath punished us above our Deserts?* Do not we hence cry out more of our smart and pain, than we do of our sins and provocations? Were we humble, we would bless the Lord, that he hath restrained his rough wind in the day of his East wind; We would wonder, that it is so well with us, that we are not in a worse condition: We would cry out, *It is of the Lords mercy that we are not consumed.* Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins? How loth are we to confess our iniquities have deserved all that we suffer, and a great deal more, and therefore to humble our selves for our sins? How do we endeavour to hide our sins from God, Man, and our selves?

Accounting Gods Judgements greater than their Deserts.

Lam 3. 40.

10. *How apt are we to admire our selves for supposed Excellencies?* For supposed Beauty, Parts, Reason, Wit and Understanding, yea, and for supposed Grace? Man (saith one) is a proud piece of flesh, and a small matter will make him shew his pride, and spread his plumes.

Admiring what they suppose they have.

11. *How apt are we to boast of any Good we do?* Of our Valour in the Field, of our Discourses in such and such Company, how wisely we discharged such a Service, how well we

Boasting of what Good they have and do.

behaved our selves in such an Action? Come see my Zeal for the Lord. Look to your hearts, you will find them unduly transported, as with the thoughts of your gifts and graces, so with what you do through the gift of grace. Our very Graces are often an occasion of boasting. 'Tis a rare thing to see a man rich in gifts, and poor in spirit. Even knowledge puffeth up.

1 Cor. 8. 1.

Puffed up
with any
thing of
theirs.

12. Doth not any thing of ours swell us? Are not some puff'd up with their fine Clothes, new Attires, Ribbons, Dressings, yea with their very Spots? Their Feathers, their Hair, the excrements of Beasts and Men, make them fly high. Are not some puff'd up with their Birth? Hence they boast, that they have the Blood of Kings and Nobles running in their Veins: or else that they are of the Stock of Abraham, descended from Parents eminent for Piety, though they have sadly degenerated from their lives and walks. How many are swell'd with their Estates? That they have Shops full, Houses full, and Baggs full, puffeth them up. Whilst all the treasure is shewed, how glad is the heart? Even Hazakiah was glad to shew the Embassadors the house of his precious things. How are others puff'd up with the smiles and respects of great men? And yet how soon may the Sun be over-cast? Then they are no more heeded than the Dial is, when the Sun is in a Cloud, how doth the bodily strength and perfections of others swell them, though every moment they are going down into the dust? What is

Isa. 39. 2.

your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth
for a little time, and then vanisheth away. Jam. 4. 14.

How are others swelled with their Church-
privileges? The Temple of the Lord, the
Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord are
we. These are lying words not to be trusted in. Ezek. 7. 4.

Others with their revelations and high en-
joyments? Paul was in danger of being ex-
alted above measure through the abundance of 2 Cor. 12.

the revelations, therefore was given to him a
thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to
buffet him, lest he should be exalted above mea-
sure. How few have heeded that of the

Apostle, Let no man think of himself more high-
ly than he ought to think? and that, If a man
think himself to be something, when he is no-
thing, he deceiveth himself. How have we

been puffed up with our Reformation, Mini-
sters, Churches, Professors? Preferring them
before others at home and abroad.

13. How little suspicion have we of our selves? Not sus-
pecting
themselves.
Of our baseness, and sinfulness, the deceits
and treachery of our own hearts? With how
much confidence do we thrust our selves into
wicked mens company, and fear not to be
leavened with them? How little do we sus-
pect that we shall fall from the grace we have,
or seem to have? We are high minded and
therefore fear not. We do not suspect that
there are worse abominations within than yet
are discovered. How do we (pretend to)
bless God that our hearts are good? We fear
not the worst of our selves. If others be
overcome with uncleanness, passion, &c. we

are confident we shall never so dishonour God.

Fuming at
plain deal-
ing.

Psal. 141. 5.

Not being
able to de-
ny them-
selves in
any lawful
content.

Being trou-
bled that
any Rule
besides
themselves.

I Pet. 2. 13

14. *Do not we fret and fume when any about to discover the vileness within? I have heard of some Ladies, that have hated the glass that gave them a true sight of their spots, and deformities. Humble David loved them best who most convincingly reproved him for what was amiss in him.*

15. *We must be pleased: we must have our sports, and the utmost of our liberty, though God and men suffer by it never so much: we cannot stoop to deny our selves some lawful contentments, though God be to be honoured thereby.*

16. *How have we been troubled that any since our selves have Ruled and been in Authority? Few have learnt the Humility of Josephs Olive-tree, Fig-tree, and Vine? The Bramble thinks himself worthy to be in the highest place. O! what fightings, what sidings, what Plots to get higher? Haman was never contented till every knee bowed: not so much as one Mordecai must be excused. If men would but speak our, they think they are fitter for Magistrates and Ministers, than those that are employed: so that whereas the humble man thinks every one better than himself, they on the contrary think themselves the only men. Do not we account it below us to submit to every Ordinance of man, though for the Lords sake? And when we cannot do what we are commanded, who suffer meckly and not in anger against the highest*

Pow-

owers? Do not we suffer in proud wrath?

Pro. 21. 24.

17. *How glad are we if others take notice of our actions? And how are we pleased if they commend us for them; and yet we would not have them think so? We will discommend our own Prayers, for deadness, straitness, and our selves for want of parts, &c. on purpose to draw forth others praise. How few are unwilling that others should have good thoughts of them, in reference to themselves? How few are troubled at the praises of their friends more than at flashes of lightning cast into their faces?*

And glad to be commended by others, though they discommend themselves.

18. *How do we rejoyce, when others cry us up, even when we know it is unjustly, when we know how hollow-hearted, low-spirited, and selfish we are? Are not we exceedingly pleased at the flowers that are spread upon our dead Corps? Though the praises be not due to us, yet how do we drink them in as the Hart doth water.*

Yea to be cryed up undeservedly.

19. *How Magisterial have we been? What great Dictatours to others; as if all were bound to dance after us? We will not abate at all, but every poor Mordecai must do obedience to our opinion.*

Being Dictatours to others.

20. *How are we guilty of despising, yea scornning those that are (as we think) below us in Birth, in Estate, in Power, in Parts, and Gifts, yea in graces? How do we evidence our slighting of them in our looks, in our words, in our gestures and behaviours? *Pride (saith one) is a bad Mother of many bad Children, these three especially, boasting of ourselves, contending with, and despising of others.*

Despising others.

Ila. 58. 9.

others. How unlike are we herein unto God
 Job 35. 6. Behold God is mighty (i.e. most mighty, most
 great, the positive is put for the superlative
 degree) and yet he despiseth not any, i.e. any
 of those who have no might, no greatness.
 yea how do we herein reproach our Maker
 God (saith one), made every man an object
 of respect, or pity, 'tis Pride that makes any
 the objects of contempt, and in them their
 Prov. 17. 5. Maker. Who so mocketh the poor, reproacheth
 his Maker.

Unwilling
 to confess
 their faults
 unto others.

21. How few will confess their faults unto
 others? Perhaps they will reform, but hate
 it to the death to go and acknowledge their
 trespasses to others, whom 'tis clear and pro-
 ved they have trespassed against. How ma-
 ny have you injured by tale-bearing, back-
 biting, &c. Must not God work a miracle to
 perswade us to make restitution, to go to the
 parties wronged, and confess the wrong
 there, and then to go from house to house to
 vindicate and clear the party, there where
 before we had wickedly stained and aspersed
 him? This makes me cry out, Lord, who
 shall be saved? Lord, many are called, but few
 are chosen.

Reproving
 haughtily.
 Isa. 3. 5.

22. When we go about that too too much ne-
 glected duty of fraternal correction, how listly do
 we manage it? How do our words, yea looks,
 and gestures, evidence our haughtiness? The
 Child becometh himself proudly against the An-
 cient.

Vindica-
 ting them-
 selves ma-
 liciously.

23. What a stirr, what a noise do we make
 to vindicate our selves when aspersed and calum-
 niated?

ministered? Whereas the humble Soul would never stir to clear himself (as knowing how much guilt and sin there is within) were it not for the honour of God, and the edification of the Lords people, which may be hindered, if prejudices and unjust reproaches be not removed: Alas! most men study revenges, and like the Grave are unsatiable in their malicious vindications.

24. *How bitter have we been against dissenting Brethren?* Would we not have cast them out of the Land, if we might have had our wills? Did not we talk of shipping away all that would not submit to our way of worship? Did not we count them, who were divided in circumstances and ceremonies from us, like Dogs and Pagans, unfit to subsist among us?

Being
bloodily
minded
toward
their dis-
senting
Brethren.

No wonder if for these things God make us a shame, and a derision, a Proverb, and a by-word to all the Nations round about us. O! our Pride testifies to our faces: we are guilty of what brought down fire on Sodom: This is the sin, that God setteth himself in battle array against, (so the word for resisting in that Scripture, *God resisteth the proud*, signifieth :) 'Tis that which makes God abhor us and our offerings. *Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord.* Believe it, Gods eyes are upon the haughty, that he may bring them down, and he watcheth his opportunity to do it. *The Lord knoweth the proud afar off.* When God meets with a spectacle, that he cannot endure to look upon

Jam. 4.6.

Prov. 16.5.

Psal. 38. 6.

upon, he turns from it, whilst it is afar off. What shall I say? Pride is the first of those
 Prov. 6. 17. *seven things, which are an abomination to the Lord.* And no wonder that God so loatheth it, whilst it crosseth the great design of God in the Gospel, which is to humble the mountains, *that no flesh should glory in his presence, but that he that glorieth, should glory only in the Lord.*

1 Cor. I.
 29, 31.



CHAP. XXII.

Their Intemperance in Eating.

Professors
 Fulness of
 Bread.

Ezek. 16.
 49.

THough Pride was the first spark that blow'd up the glory of Sodom, yet there was also *Fulness of Bread*, that made the flame the greater. Behold, *This was the iniquity of thy Sister Sodom, Pride, Fulness of Bread, &c.* Their Pride was evidenced in their *Fulness of Bread*, as the Cause in its Effect. The word *σεππορειν*, which signifieth to be temperate, is (as one well observes) applyed frequently to the Mind, in opposition to pride; because Sobriety proceeds from an humble sense that nothing is ours, but all that we have is Gods; and all Intemperance is commonly the issue of a proud Spirit, which makes men look on them.

themselves as *Owners*, and all Creatures as their proper Goods, which are perfectly at their disposal. Hence the *Crown of Pride*, Isa. 28. and the *Drunkards of Ephraim*, are both 1, 3. names for the same persons. And is not our Pride evidenced in our Fulness of Bread? *Sodoms* intemperance in eating (not to insist on intemperance in drinking) was very great, but I fear *Englands* hath exceeded *Sodoms*: I will not say *all your labour is for the mouth*, Eccles. 6. 7. (as *Solomon* complains) and yet the appetite is not filled; but this I say, that *some* live to eat, *some* sacrifice all to the belly, to *some* the belly is a God. Few can displease their appetite: like prophane *Esau*, they part from their heritage, from the blessing of the first-born, for a mess of pottage, for a little pleasure to the taste. How will we deny our selves in respect of *Life*, when we cannot deny our selves in respect of a little *Meat*? As Heaven and God are low, very low with them, that cannot deny themselves in a little *Indian-Smoke*, in a Pipe, in a cup of Liquor, but will be immoderate in these, though thereby they hazard the displeasure of God: So are they very low with us, if we cannot deny our selves in our Morsels. All our ruine came in at this door, that *Adam* ventured the displeasure of God, to eat a little pleasant Fruit. A man would think, that the wounds we received by the mouth, should make us check our appetite all our dayes.

1. *How have we been guilty of eating too much?* A little would content Nature, which hath

Evidenced in their much eating.

Luk. 21.
24.

hath therefore given us a little *Mouth* and *Stomach*, to teach us (saith an Ancient) Moderation. How have *our hearts been overcharged with surfeiting*, whilst *wicked men* with *drunkenness*? How have we forgotten Christ's charge against this sin, even to his own Disciples? Have we not hereby been disabled to perform the service which we owe to God? As *some* have been *strong to drink*, so *others* to eat: Both have been unfitted to wait upon God thereby. The end of our eating should have been to fit us, not to indispose us for the service of God. We should measure our Cheer by that which Nature requires, and not by that which a greedy Appetite desires. We divest our selves of *Man*, of Reason, that should guide us, when we are led by a sensual Appetite. And yet alas! When we have eaten enough, and perhaps more than enough, a new Dish at the second course makes us fall on without fear or wit, and we put not a knife to our throat. Serving divers lusts and pleasures, is the high way to damnation. This way sin entred into the World, and in this way, O! how many are posting to Hell? If you would adopt your selves Children of wrath, then fulfill the desires of the flesh. O that we should be so senseless, so brutish, as to venture the eternal ruine of our Souls to gratifie our appetites for a quarter of an-hour! *She that sate deliciously, both torment and sorrow given her.* If that you will choose to be beasts here, and to eat as beasts, as much as you can, Know that

Prov. 23. 2.

Eph. 2. 3.

Rev. 18. 7.

that Heaven will not (as Noah's Ark did) admit of any Beasts within it. When *Terrullian* gives an account of the Christians Feasts; In our feeding (saith he) we remember that we are to pray at night: Prayer is the first and last dish of the feast: and when we depart our behaviour is so religious and modest, that one would have thought, we had rather been at a Sermon, than at a Supper. Blush, O Reader! to consider how far short we fall of these Christians in our banqueting hours. Believe it, Intemperance and Luxury are National sins, the sins of England! It was spoken (unless I am mis-informed) of our Nation, That we build as if we should live for ever, and eat as if we should die presently. O! when shall we imitate that great Apostle? *All things* (saith he) *are lawful for me; but I will not be brought under the power of any.* It is a base thing for a man to be under the power of Drinks, Apparel, Recitations, and so of Flesh, of Meats, to be a Vassal to those things over which the Lord hath given him dominion. He that loveth any thing too much, (saith *Aquinas*) is in a sense Servant thereunto. And what saith the Apostle? *Know ye not, that to whom ye yield your selves servants to obey, his servants ye are, to whom ye obey, whether of sin, &c.* How many serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own bellies? How many are like the men of the old World, *Given to eating?* so the word in the Original properly signifieth.

I Cor. 6.

12.

*Quia nemo
rem aliquam
amat quodam
modo
se vultus istius
efficitur.*

Rom. 6. 16.

Mat. 24.

38.

The cost-
liness of
their Diet,
Above
their
Estates.

2. *How have our meats born no proportion to our gains and incomes?* The rich man, that *sared deliciously*, had some pretence for it, for he had riches to countervail the expense of his Table: But doth not the lowness of our Estates require a meaner Table? God know we have been *worse than Infidels* on this account, in that we have been so farr from *providing for our own*, that to pamper the flesh with costly diet, we have suddenly *impo-verish'd* our selves, and brought our Children to live upon others trenchers, whereas we should have abated of our superfluities for their sakes, if not for our own. Go voluptuous wretch, unto the *Ant*, and to the *Bee*, they provide for Winter; but thou hast had no forecast, and so Poverty comes in on thee and thine, as an armed man, irresistible.

Unsuitable
to the
Times.

3. *How have our Tables been unsuitable to the Times we live in?* Whether Zion wear the garments of joy, or of heaviness, all's one, the belly must be served, our dishes must not abate. Thou *sarest deliciously every day*: All times are alike to thee. This is a great sin, and I cannot but charge many Protestours with it. Respect is not had to the tokens of Gods wrath. *We eat without fear*: Without fear of the wrath of God, that is ready to break forth upon us. *In this day doth the Lord of Hosts call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldness, and so girding with sackcloth*: And behold, joy and gladness, slaying Oxen, and killing Sheep, (actions

Jude v. 12.

Isa. 22. 12,

13, 14.

lawful

lawful enough at another time) eating flesh, and drinking wine, &c. And it was revealed in mine ears by the Lord of Hosts, surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till ye die, saith the Lord God of Hosts. We have made little or no distinction of times: Perhaps a Fast every month is (carelessly) kept: but every day should be a day of abstinence, every day we should abate of what we might enjoy, if the judgements of God were not amongst us, and others impending over us: God hath a controversie with us for feasting, when Joseph is in the pit, and for our eating the Lambs of the Flocks; for that we are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.

Amos 4.6.

4. How little respect have we had to the necessities of the Saints? O, if there were any true love to God, to Religion, to the Church of God, and to the Saints of the most high, we would abate of our worldly comforts in this day, we would cut our selves short of what we were wont to lay out, not only in fine clothes, but in house-keeping, in expensive meats and drinks, we would not give such liberty to the satisfying of the flesh, we would be more sparing in our diet, that we might be in the greater capacity to promote pious and charitable designs. But alas! iniquity abounds, and the love of many (save to their guts) waxeth cold.

Not respecting the Saints necessities.

Membra putida & mortua quæ sensum non habent; tales sunt Christiani, qui de alienis afflictionibus non dolent. Aug. in Psal. 130.

5. Do not we eat without an holy fear of God? The Elders of Israel did eat their bread before the Lord. But so have not we, so do not we, eat as in the presence of God. Have

Eating without fear of God. Exod. 18.

not some been so eager upon the pleasing of the flesh, and gratifying of their sensual appetites, as that they have (secretly at least) been troubled at a long grace (as it is called) before meat? Have not some fallen to their meat without invoking God to be with them? How unlike are such unto Christ, whose usual practice it was, to lift up his eyes to Heaven, and crave a blessing upon the creatures before he did partake of them? How distracted have been the thoughts of others that have prayed, in that short time? How were their thoughts on the meats and drinks? How hastily do men after a blessing is craved run to the Dish, without any the least pause or consideration whether God heard them yea or no, when they called to him? How commonly do we raze our Petitions, snatch them out of Gods hands, I mean, contradict all our Prayers? We pray our discourses may be heavenly, and they are altogether earthly. Few can say as Blessed David was wont at the close of the meal, *Blessed be God, not one word of earthly things since we sat down?* We pray we may eat for God, and we eat for our selves. We cannot say that *our Spikenard sends forth his pleasant smell, whilst we are at the Table.* We have not so good a plea to make as some, *we have eat and drank in thy presence.* This is not written over our Tables, *Thou God see'st.* We can seldom call our Table *Annal*, because we have

seen

seen God in this place. How little do we consider, that they are Gods creatures. *She* Hof. 2. 8.
did not know that I gave her Corn, &c. And that as the meat is Gods, so it is he who gives us appetites, and strength and ability to put every crum into our mouths; *for in him we live and move.* How little do we believe that we must account for every bit and drop? How little do we consider that God stoops the creature to us, that we may stoop to him, and lay down our lives as willingly for Gods honour, as God causeth the creature to bleed and die for our use? How little do we think of the Heavenly banquet, that our Father is preparing for us, where the cloth shall never be taken away, where we shall hunger and thirst no more, but be fully satisfied, and that for ever and ever? Examine your spirits and frames at your Tables, whether the fear of God be before your eyes, whether you stand in awe of him? It may be found that you never more forget God, than when God is mostly remembring you: When his goods are most in your hands and mouths, your Deut. 8. 10, 11. mouths are so full, that they cannot shew forth his praise: your eyes are so held to your Belly-gods, that you forget *Jehovah.* Are there not some that will crave a blessing before they eat, that yet fail to return thanks afterwards, though *Joel* saith in his Prophecy to Gods people, *ye shall eat and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God?* Joel 2. 26.

6. *Have not we sed without a Christian fear of scandalizing others upon our eating profuse.* Of scandalizing others,

sufely? What saith the Drunkard? Why may not I rots the Kan or Pot (in plain English) be drunk as well as such and such gormandize why may not I drink immoderately as well as such eat immoderately? why may not we sit one or two hours to drink, as well as such sit one hour or two to fill their panch with meat? Gluttons harden and justifie Drunkards. Jude will tell you, that sensual persons are the Spots of a Christian society. The old Gentiles in Cyprians dayes were much scandalized at the intemperance of Christians, Lo, these great Boasters, who pretend to be redeemed from the tyranny of the Devil, and so be dead to the World, what slaves are they to their own sensual desires? O my Brethren! Is it good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, or any thing else, whereby thy Brother stumbleth, or is offended, or made weak.

Jude v. 12.

*Ecce qui
jactant. se
redemptos,
&c.
Cyp. de
duplici Mar-
ty: 10.*

Rom. 14.
21.Of snares
in eating.

Job 1. 5, 6.

7. Do not we eat without a prudent fear of the snares that are in our Dishes? In eating there ought to be much caution. Job was afraid of the entertainments of his Children. He was a wise man, and knew that there were more guests than were invited. I wish we knew it too. We think if the Sons of God come together, the Devil will not come with them, though the Scripture assures us he will. It would be some check when we sit at the Table to consider that the first immoderate Sop is handed over by the Devil, and in goes he with it into our Souls.

*Eating for
low and
base ends,*

8. How have we had low, base, earthly, sensual, and Devilish ends in our eating? not to refresh our bodies, but our pallats, not to

The
glorific
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glorifie God, but to pamper the flesh? yea, have not some men led on such and such deths, on purpose to irritate and provoke their lusts? Sure our Enemy is strong enough, we had need beat down the body and keep it under, and not put weapons into our Enemies hands. What saith the wise man? *When thou fatest to eat with a Ruler* (such keep plentiful tables, especially Magistrates on their Feast dayes) *consider diligently what is before thee, and put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite, i. e.* Bridle thine appetite by diligence, yea, force, let not the slave alwayes be on horseback, alwayes rule, be as circumspect, as if thou wert under the razour; or thus, *consider diligently what is before thee, else thou puttest a knife to thy throat, i. e.* thou endangerest thy life, yea, thy soul, shouldst thou give way to thy greedy appetite to feed upon all the dainties on the Table? 'tis a thousand to one but thy meats will be incentives to lust. What saith the Apostle, *Whether you eat or drink, &c. let all be done to the glory of God.* Why doth the Apostle name those actions of eating and drinking, but because we commonly eat and drink (at best) meerly to please the appetite, and not to fit for Gods Service? When we have taken as much as serves this end, yet we must have one bit more, or one dish more to please our fleshly desires, and so God and the Devil must part stakes.

To shut up this: I believe many men dig their graves with their teeth, and their hells with their tongues, their liquorish tongues.

Prov. 23.
1, 2.
See the
large
English
Annot.

1 Cor. 10.
31.

Jude v. 12.

*Ecce qui
jactant se
redemptos,
&c.
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Of snares
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Eating for
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Prov. 23.
1, 2.
See the
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1 Cor. 10.
31.

Among the millions that are now in the grave or hell, their inordinate appetite hasteneth most thither. I say not but we may please our palate, at some times especially, a great liberty is indulged to the sick; but if we have not an higher design than to please the appetite, our Belly is our God. Little do many think that they are setting up another God at their Tables. The Babylonians had Bel for their God, a God of Brass; but these men have a God of flesh. The Rabbies say, he is a Glutton or Belly-God that eats a pound of flesh, and drinks a quart of wine. Have not we many such? and do they not sacrifice to their God with a bowed knee too? Repent, O England! repent, of thy abuse of the good creatures of God, and thereby of thy sacrilegious robbing of God of his worship and time. How often have ye so cramb'd your selves that you have been unfit for any acts of worship, yet, for any of the works of your particular callings? Your heads have been heavy, and spirits dull, and so God hath had the Carcas, but excesses have taken away the heart. The bread and wine are in your feasts, but you regard not the work of the Lord, &c. therefore my people are gone into Captivity. I wish two things for you, First, That you would be as ingenious as Austin was, who confessed he was no drunkard, but yet sometimes too immoderate in eating. And Secondly, That you would be restless till God hath taught you, what he did him: Lord (saith he) thou hast now taught me to use my meat, as my medicine, to repair,

Mos. 4. 11.
Ma. 5. 11,
12, 13.

not to oppress nature. O! when will the grace of God appear, and teach us to deny worldly lusts, and to live soberly? Tit. 2. 11, 12.



CHAP. XXIII.

Their abundance of Idleness.

A Third Sin of Sodom was Idleness, Be- hold, this was the iniquity of thy Sister Sodom, &c. an abundance of Idleness was in her and in her daughters. This Sin is the Companion of the former: when the belly is full, the bones would be at rest, and when men have eat and drunk to excess, then they rise up to play. This, and the former, are *City-sins*, they were found in Sodom and Gomorrah, and I wish they were not amongst us also.

Professors
Idleness.
Ezek. 16.
49.

1. *How are we guilty of abundance of Idleness in our particular callings?* Few have this for their Motto, *Laboremus*, Let us be working, I mean, working that which we ought. How many at the great day will God upbraid with, *O wicked and slothful servant!* Every man hath a Talent of time and strength, but it is hid, it is not employed, at least as it ought. God made not man to play, but to sweat out his living. 'Twas Gods Ordinance in Paradise, and since that we are enjoined

In their
particular
callings.

Ezek. 18.
18.

Matth. 20.
3. 9.

2 Theff. 3.
11.
Nih'l agen-
tes, sed
curiose sata-
gentes.

to labour with our hands, and not to eat the bread of Idleness. How many, because they have not done good among their people, shall die in their iniquity? Our land is full of drones, and no wonder; for we train up our Children in Idleness, and indulge to them, whilst wasting the first of their dayes in foolish pleasures and recreations. Forraigners breed their Children (to our shame be it spoken) to work those gaies with their hands, which our Children must play away their time with; hence they having inured themselves to Idleness they hate labour for the future. Christ saw some standing idle: here he might see many: He could not endure it, he thought it unreasonable, why stand ye here all the day Idle? O, how many are idle all the dayes of their lives? How many Gentlemen and their Sons are there without a calling? They live as if God had sent them into the world to make their hands as perches for birds to sit upon: they are of no use to the Publick. Is Christ how Idle are the Dames? They live as if God had given them reasonable souls, and the light of the Sun only to dress themselves, to view a glass, and to paint and adorn their Carkasses. There are some among you that work not at all; and yet busie-bodies, busie to invent wayes to pass away time, though time be still running, and they are hastning into Eternity. Doing nothing (saith the Apostle) and yet working every where, save where they should: busie to go from house to house to complement friends, to devour others times: busie

to carry tales and news, but hating the work
of their calling, wherein God hath set them.
The whole life of many is to eat, and drink,
and sleep, and sport, and sit, and talk, and
laugh themselves fat (but there is leanness in
their Souls.) A kind of vagrant people they
be, that having little to do, the Devil is loth
they should be idle, and therefore he hires
them to devour time, to carry news and tales
to mispend others times : *They learn to be* 1 Tim. 5.
Idle : they study which way they may mispend 13.
time, wandering from house to house, and
yet they are not only idle, but *busie-bodies*.
One compares them to *Pedlars*, opening
their Packs, and dropping here a tale, and
there a tale. These are at leisure to hear the
Devil, and to observe his Orders. He that
will not serve God at home, the Devil, ra-
ther than he shall stand out, will send him of
his errands, and get him to put his Sickle into
another mans Corn. "Go (saith Satan) in-
to that house, and rail against such a good
man, carry his miscarriage from one to
another, till his name rots and stinks in their
Nostrils : Go to such a mans door, he is
employed in reading the Scriptures and
good books, or Catechising his Family, &c.
Go and divert him, eat up his time, that he
may have no leisure for such works. He goes,
he is a *busie-body*; a *tatler* too. He must go
whom the Devil drives ; Hence occasion is
given to the Adversary to speak reproachful-
ly, for that so many are turned aside after
Satan. Let it be considered and la-
mented,

mented, *how much precious time is devoured the Bed* ; Five hours sleep will suffice for some constitutions : The utmost that Physicians allow, is seven hours ; but some wait and bury themselves in their Beds almost half their time. How little do many consider, that in the Day of Judgement, they must give account, as for every idle word, so for their idleness in their Bed-chambers ? Sluggard, view the Sun, its running a race, whilst thou art tumbling on thy Bed, and crying, *O that this were labour* ! View the Wind and the Air, they are in motion : View the Waters, they sink and corrupt, unless running : nay view the dull earth, it is not so dull as thou art, it brings forth for the use of Man. *Go to the Ant thou*

Prov. 6. 6. *sluggard, yea any where, consider the ways of all, save thy self, and be wise. What ! a Professor, and yet guilty of an unnatural sin ? Nature puts all creatures into motion, and to provide for themselves : thou art worse than*

1 Tim. 5. 8. *an Infidel : yea worse than a Beast : The poor Infant cannot suck without labour, and yet thou wouldest live without labour. God takes*

2 Thes. 3. 10. *this so ill, that he would not have them to eat, who will not labour, and if we know such, we sin if we feed them. God hath not forbid meat to be given to any other sinners, only these are not to be fed, let them starve and die, if they will not labour. The sluggard*

Prov. 26. 4. *will not plow by reason of the cold, therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing : God hath no pity for drones, and he would not have*

Give us to pity them : Drones are to be beaten out of the Hive, and starved in Winter : It is the Workman that is worthy of meat in Christs account : *Idleness hath brought much evil upon you*, and bred many in you, it begets many diseases in the body, but many more in the Soul : *it exempts a man from the protection of Angels*, and it exposeth to Gods wrath : it brought ruine upon Sodom, and the Cities round about, and they are set forth for an example suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Mat. 10. 10. Psal. 91. 11. Jude v. 7.

2. How are we guilty of abundance of Idleness in our general callings ? And above all Idleness, Spiritual sloth is most dangerous. I find some, with unwearied diligence, labouring to enlarge their Possessions, and to raise their Posterity ; they rise early, and sit up late, and eat the bread of carefulness, but all is for the Body : they do little or nothing for their precious Souls, and for Eternity. Christ and Heaven stand by, and few regard them : Few work out their Salvation with fear and trembling. Some will not be at so much pain, for their Souls, as to perform the common outward Duties of Religion. They will go to the Market, or to be merry with Friends, many a mile ; but if a Lecture be but a few paces from their thresholds, they count it intollerable to wet their feet, to expose themselves to the air : Well, Well ; *God hath eased you of this labour.* But if men are for some easie parts of Religion, yet how few are for the difficult parts thereof ? They cannot

cannot endure to watch their hearts, to fastify the Lords day so strictly, as not think their own thoughts, nor speak their own words, nor do their own deeds. How many Professours have so long given way to their lazy distempers, have lain so long upon the Bed of sloth, that when we press them to any painful and laborious Duties, they think it excuse enough, to say, *We have put off our Countenance, and loth we are to put it on*. We have given way to sloth so long, that we hate to take pains for Christ, and for Eternity? Hence Self-examination, Meditation, Watchfulness, against the first risings of sin, Mortification of inward heart-sins, &c. these works are totally laid by; and the longer we neglect them, the more ado there is to persuade us to take them up. We are like truant-Boyes, who hate their Book after a long vacation. All we have to uphold our selves with, is this, that the Spirit is willing when God knows the contrary. We are willing to be rich, and therefore take pains: So we would in Spiritual things too, if we were so desirous of them. If we were willing to enjoy Christ in our Closets, would we be even asleep there upon our knees? If we were willing to know the way to Glory, would we not take so much pains, as to go to the Shepherds tents, and ask for the good old way? "O! O! It will cut you to the heart, when you come to Hell-gate, that you mist of Heaven, for not enquiring the way thither; and that you took more pains to be rich, and

"to

to damn your Souls, than to save them. Had that time been spent in Prayer, holy Conference, and in Self-arraignments, which was wasted in the Bed, Shop, Fields; unnecessarily, you might have had an eternal rest; whereas Hell will be, as intolerable to all, so especially to them, who have stood idle all the day long.



CHAP. XXIV.

Their Unmercifulness.

THE Fourth Sin of Sodom was this, *Neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy*: That is, they were unmerciful and inhumane. And are not some Professors even in England very hard-hearted and cruel? I have of thought and said, That *Our late Civil Wars have had too great influence upon us, to make us cruel*. If there be among you a poor man, of one of thy Brethren, within any of thy Gates, in thy Land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thy heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor Brother; but thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth. O! The poor we have alwayes

Professors
unmercifulness.
Ezek. 16.
49.

Deut. 15:
7, 8.

Luk. 14. 13.

with

- with us ! But, When we make a Feast, do we call the poor ? Who invites the Guests that Christ hath bid for our Tables ? When I consider how rare, Bowels of mercy and kindness are, it makes me fear (and I have Scriptural grounds for my fear) that few are the Elders of God. O hard-hearted Professours ! Hear ye the Word of the Lord : He shall be judged without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy. He shall have all judgement, pure judgement, without any mixtures of mercy, unmixed wrath shall be his portion : Christ is so resolved to punish the Unmerciful, that he will over-look any sinner, rather than him, yea, for the greater honour of the Justice of God, The Lord seems to begin and end the great Assizes with the Arraignment and Sentencing of the Unmerciful man. How few compassionate Professours are there ? The proper, vital act of Mercy, is Compassion. How few resent the miseries of others, as if they were their own ? How few set themselves to do good, to those who are miserable ? Such, what-ever they pretend, are indeed unmerciful ; for Mercy is an active, and a communicative thing. How few are merciful to others Souls ? How few pity and set themselves to help sinning Souls ? (but more of this under another Head.) How few are merciful to the Bodies of others ? How many are there, that will not spare of their superfluities, to cloth Christs naked shoulders, or to fill his hungry belly ? Men lay out more to adorn a Cup-board, or the walls of their houses,
- Col. 3. 11.
- Jam. 2. 13.
- Mat. 25.
41, 42, &c.
- Mat. 9. 36.
- Luke 10.
33.

houses, than ever they gave to Jesus Christ,
and his Servants, all their dayes : Men can
feed their Birds, their Cattes, their Doggs,
their Swine; but the Sucklings and Lambs
of Jesus Christ perish for want : Christ tells
you, what kindness you shew to his Spouse, Marth. 25.
his Friends, his Children, he counts as done 40.
unto himself: and believe it; all the scornes,
and neglects you have cast on, either, his Am-
bassadors, or poor Saints, he will remember,
another day. Go to thy Closet, and carry
this with thee, *who so stoppeth his ear at the* Prov. 21.
cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but 13.
shall not be heard. If you give, to whom is
it? Is it not only to the poor of your own
party? But hath not the Lord charg'd you,
to give to every man that asketh? Hath he ex- Luke 6.30.
cepted any, but idlers? Are not you to do Gal. 6. 10.
good to all, though especially to the Household of
faith? And among them, should not your
greatest charity have been set forth on them,
who are become poor, not by vile courses,
but by Gods Providence, and for Conscience
sake? But alas! how few can appeal to the
heart-searching God concerning their merci-
fulness? How few (if destruction from God
be any terrour to them) dare imprecate upon
themselves, what Job did in case of unmerci-
fulness? How few dare say to God, *If I have* Job 31. 16,
withheld the poor from their desire, or have cau- 17, 18, 19,
sed the eyes of the Widow to fail, or have eaten 20, 21, 22,
my morsel my self alone, and the Fatherless 23.
hath not eaten thereof, &c. If I have seen any
perish for want of clothing, or any poor without
covering,

covering, &c. then let mine arm fall from
shoulder blade, and mine arm be broken from
the bone.



CHAP. XXV.

*Their unrighteousness, or unfaithfulness
in Trading.*

Professors
miscarria-
ges in
Trading,
with re-
ference to
Buyers and
Sellers.

A Las ! Alas ! Instead of Mercifulness, Be-
hold Oppression, Violence, Deceit,
Fraud, &c. This is a Lamentation, and should
be for a Lamentation. Instead of giving to
others that which is *our own*, we deny them
that which is *their own* : Instead of letting go
our own right, and those dues, which in
Justice others are bound to pay unto us ; yea,
instead of giving more of our own, to help
them in their necessities (which Mercy calls
for, even not only not to require, what others
owe us, when Providence hath dis-enabled
them to pay us, but also to give them more
to support their feeble state withall) behold
Injustice, in propriety of speech. What
defraudings is there one of another ? How
do men, not only take all advantages of
their Brethren, to get what is due to them,
as to seize on a Mortgage, when the Mort-
gage

gage-money cannot be paid, or to sue a bond, or turn a man out of his lease, when the day of payment is mist, &c. but also take advantage from the necessities of the poor to over-reach them, to get from them, either their houses or goods, to be sure what is not their own? Have not we *grinded the faces of the poor*? God will reckon for this speedily. Look over the Prophets, and see whether unmercifulness and unrighteousness ever went unpunished.

How few are there who mete to others, as they would have them to measure to themselves? The rule of Christ, whereby peace among men would be preserved, and much scandal prevented, is not heeded by us. We do not deal with others, as we would be dealt with, though Christ sayes unto us, *All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them*: for this is the Law and the Prophets, and though we are also exhorted by the Apostle to follow what ever things are true, and honest, and just, and pure, and lovely. We are apt to follow a multitude to do evil, what the greater part of the world are wont to do, is the rule whereby we steer; hence we vary from that rule of righteousness, which the Lord hath prescribed: through the prevalency of self-love, through a covetous humour, we are loth to heed, what may any whit thwart a worldly interest.

How common, but cursed a principle is it, that every man may get for his wares, as much

Mat. 7. 12.
Phil. 4. 8.

As to Sellers, selling for as much as can be got.

as he can ? Hence men take advantage of others necessities, or of their want of skill: Hence bad wares are put into mens hands for good wares, or else unreasonable demands are made to the prejudice of the buyer: would we be so dealt with ?

Over-
reaching
those that
trust.

When men depend upon our honesty and ingenuity to sell them a good pennyworth, *how common* is it with a glavering tongue, and seeming affection to our Neighbours good, to *over-reach him*, and cheat him, *though he re-
poseth confidence in us ?*

Asking
more than
they will
accept.

How commonly do men demand a far greater sum for their wares, than they will accept ? Hereby they shew an oppressing mind, if their Customers would but comply with them. The *Quakers* will rise up in Judgement, to condemn this generation. Is it not a foul shame, that they by their light within (which at best is but the light of a natural Conscience) should exceed others, who pretend to an *higher principle*, even the light of Grace ? But O, how do men mind *profit* more than *their own honour and reputation*, yea (which is more *inexcusable*) than the *reputation of Christ and his Gospel* ? The name of God suffers, not so much when thou art *rotten hearted* in thy *Closet*, as it doth when thou art a *Cheater* in thy *Shop* ? But wo and alas ! Men are so set upon gain, that they can be contented to be voiced for Cheats and Confe-
ners, so they may but *greaten their Estates*: This is a *salve* for their *soar* : they cannot be ignorant how the Gospel suffers, and how
many

many prejudices are strengthened in the hearts of wicked men against Religion, by observing Professors unreasonable demands for their Wares, and yet they continue grievous ex-acters. Is it not matter of lamentation, that some profess, they had rather deal with a Turk, or with a Jew, than with such and such a Christian? And that they meet with fairer Quarter from Drunkards, &c. in their Trades, than from Precisians? By reason of you the Name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles. Wherein doth your Light shine before men? They cannot dive into your hearts, they can only discern your actions: They know not what your Love to God is, though you pretend much to knowledge, yet knowledge void of charity and honesty, is to them an abomination.

Rom. 2.24.

How few trade in fear, lest by getting an Estate, they lose God, and a good Conscience? When one told Latimer, That he was censured in paying for a Knife double to what it was worth, No, (said he) He hath not censured me, but his own Conscience. No wonder that Tradesmen complain of deadness in their Families and Closets, and impute it to their Callings, (and thereby charge God implicitly) Alas, it is not their Calling hath straitned and deadned their hearts towards God; but their oppression and deceit in their businesses, hath provoked God to leave them; and then they are, in the business of God, like a silly Dove, without an heart. Hath not God expressly charged you, Let no

Not fear-
ing Soul-
losses even
in their
gains.

1 Theff. 4.
6. *man go beyond, or over-reach another in any matter, because that the Lord is the Avenger of all such? The vengeance of God is upon thee, in the straitness of thy Spirit in Duties, and without Repentance it will follow thee, till it hath laid thee in the Pit of Hell.*

*Ingrossing
all Trade.*

How do men labour to ingross all Trade to themselves, by exclaiming against their Neighbours, and by under-selling them, at one time, that they may engage the Buyer to become their Customer, of whom they will surely fetch out their penny-worths, in the next bargain that is driven?

*Boasting of
selling too
dear.*

How do men boast of their selling their Commodities at such and such Rates, though their Consciences must needs suggest to them, that they have over-fold them, and therein have declined the rules of moderation and righteousness?

*Loth to
make Re-
stitution.*

When you have sold too dear, and so cheated your Brother, though Conscience, in times of sickness and danger, begins to contend with you about it, yet how loth are you to make restitution for the wrong you have offered? How unlike are you to them in Nehemiah? Then said they, We will restore them, and will require nothing of them; so will we do as thou sayest. If a Nehemiah should say, So God spake out every man from his house, and from his labour, that performeth not this promise, even thus be he shaken out and emptied, you would hardly say Amen, and praise the Lord.

Nehem. 5.
12, 13.

When

When men buy a Commodity, how apt are they to discommend it, to bring down the price, to say, It is naught, when all the while they know it is offered on easie terms? How do Buyers take the Advantage of the Seller's Ignorance of the worth of his own Goods? There is a cursed Proverb amongst English-men, but in too great request, That a man may not only sell as dear, but buy as cheap as he can. Few like Austin, that bought a Book, at an unskilful Stationers hands, for an inconsiderable price, and afterwards gave the value of it. Bread of deceit is sweet to a man, but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel.

As to Buyers, crying out 'tis naught.

Prov. 20. 17.

How often do Buyers (even as Sellers often say, they will not, they cannot take a penny less for such a Commodity, so) answer, that they will not give a farthing more, for what they have cheapned, and yet all the while intend to come up to the Seller's price?

Saying, They will give no more, and yet do.

How common is it, for men to take up Wares, and to promise payment at such a day, and yet fail? Yea, how do they promise, though they know they shall not be able to be as good as their word? It were better for thee to begg thy bread, than thus to steal from thy Neighbour. Thou art ashamed to begg, as he of old: thou shouldst be ashamed much more to do worse, viz. to defraud thy Neighbour. The getting of treasures by a lying tongue, is a vanity, tossed to and fro of them that seek death: It is a thing very

Failing at the day of payment.

Prov. 21. 6.

frequent, tossed to and fro, but it is a vanity, and they that use it are *Felones de se*, they do but seek death and destruction by it.

As to
Buyers
and Sel-
lers both.

How few are there, that in their buying and selling, give a proof of their loving their Neighbours as themselves, their Neighbours goods and welfare as their own?

1 Pet. 1. 15.

"O, When will ye be holy in all manner
"of conversation? Holy in your Trades, as
"well as in your Church-Assemblies? Holy
"in the Shop, and in all secular employments?
"So holy, as to abide with God in your Cal-
"ling? When will ye trade for God, ra-

Eph. 4. 28.

"ther than for Self? When will ye labour
"with your hands, that ye may be able to give,
"and not only to receive? When will ye
"trade in fear, and be in the fear of the Lord
"all the day; and that, lest your Shop should
"prove your bane; and whilst seeking after
"the Mammon of this life, ye lose the true
"Substance? Is this thy Prayer before thou
"enterest upon thy Calling? (O that it
"were!) Lord help me to trade for thee,
"whilst for my self; and for the good of my
"Neighbours Soul, Body, Goods, as well as
"for my own.

With re-
ference to
the King,
Stealing
Customs.

How few, among all the several sorts of Traders, render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's? Hierom long since hath told you, That Cæsar is not Proper, but Appellative. All the Emperours were called Cæsars, from Julius Cæsar.

Confide-
rations
against it.

How can you quiet your Consciences to steal Custom, as many of you do? *What is,*

it, *save the Law, that gives you right to all you have?* And by the *Law*, so much of your Goods is the *King's* : It is alienated from you to his *Crown and Revenue* : How dare you cheat him ? Should you think it hard measure to pay so great a tribute ? *Have you forgot what Christ (who came under the Law) did ?* Though tribute was exacted of him, when the Children were free, yet he would work a *Miracle*, rather than give offence, in denying to pay the *Fine*, that was imposed on him. *Why do ye not take the safest course, if it be a disputable matter ?* To be sure you will not give offence to *God*, to the *King*, to your *Conscience*, by paying *Customs* ; but you may to all by defrauding. *Do you herein as you would be dealt with ?* If you were the *Head*, would you have the *inferiour Members* impoverish the *Head* ? If you were the *Political Father*, would you have your *Children* cheat you ? *Do not you by bribes and otherwise, tempt the Kings Officers to be false to their trust, and to damn their Souls by perjury and treachery ?*

Matth. 17.
24, 25, 26,
27.

Lastly, Consider, that *self-love*, and *self-interest* are prevalent, as to make you to favour and enrich your selves, so also to bribe your minds and judgements, and to enslave them to your base passions. O, Consider how apt is every one unequally to favour himself, and to suck in any corrupt and absurd reasonings, whereby he may greaten himself, though by the ruine of others ? If you say (as they of the *Silver-shrines*, *This brings in our gain*)

We cannot subsist without stealing Customs: How else can we live? A Father will tell you, *Indigna vox Christianis, &c.* It ill becomes a Christians mouth, to ask, *How shall I live?* Not one that Christ called to forsake Trades and Professions, did ever answer him, I must not give over my gain: They only reformed, or relinquished their Trades, when Christ called them. Till you can relinquish unlawful gains, you are none of Christs Disciples. Those in the *Acts*, that burnt their unlawful Books, to the loss of thousands, shewed themselves true Converts, so mightily grew the Word and prevailed. O! When Tyre shall be converted, her trading and dealings shall be sacred, Her merchandise, and her hire shall be holiness to the Lord.

Act. 19. 20.

Isa. 23. 18.

Their
Lying.

V. Patricks
Epitome
of Mans
Duty.
P. 45.
46.

Here give me leave to add the Sin of Lying, too too common among all sorts of Traders, as well as others. And truly this Sin comes not improperly under the Head of Injustice. *Justice*, even when it is not taken most largely, (so it is taken for all Religion) comprehends our whole duty to our Neighbour, as to matters of right: Thus, by vertue of the fifth Commandment, to do justly, is to give our Parents their due honour, whether they be *Natural*, *Civil*, or *Spiritual*: In respect of the sixth, it is to preserve the Life of our Neighbour, and to have a care, that we injure him not in his being: In reference to the seventh, it is to preserve his just Relations, and not touch them,

them, or cause the violation of their faith to him : in reference to the *eighth*, it is to preserve his estate, and not meddle with his goods : the *ninth* requires that we preserve his good name, and not defame him, nor do any prejudice to his credit, no more than we would to his estate : and by vertue of the *tenth*, we are to moderate our very desires, so as not to envy him that which is his, nor to long to have it in our possession. To be sure there is righteousness to be looked after in words and expressions, as well as in deeds and actions. But alas ! *How doth the sin of lying abound among us ?* (And no wonder when Perjury is so common a sin) for *this God* Hos.4.1,2.
hath a controversie with the Land. Is there Jer.9.4, 5.
not need to take heed every one of his Neighbour, and not to trust in any Brother ? will not every one deceive his Neighbour, and not speak the truth ? Have not they taught their tongue to speak lies ? If you are not couzening-lyars, or false-witness-lyers, yet are you not reviling-lyars ? Do you not upon every petty difference speak of one another ye care not what ? do ye not spread lying defamations ? *I heard the defaming of many* — Jer. 20. 10.
re- port say they, and we will report. Is not the sawning-lyar common among us ? Their words are the words of Jacob, but their hands are the hands of Esau. Psal.55.21.
The words of their mouths
are smoother than butter, but warr is in their
hearts : their words are softer than oyl, yet are
they drawn swords : there is no faithfulness in
their mouth, their throat is an open sepulcher.

Upon

Pfal. 12.
1, 2.

Hof. 7. 3.

Job 13. 7.

Considera-
tions
against
Lying.
Iſa. 63. 8.

Upon this occasion give me leave to use David's Prayer, *Help Lord, for the godly man ceaseth, for the faithful fail from among the Children of men.* Why, wherein consist their ungodliness? *they speak vanity every one with his Neighbour: with flattering lips, and with a double heart do they speak.* Is there not also many a News-telling liar among us? They believe in their Consciences, that it is false, what they relate; and yet, to promote an interest, or to make hearts glad with lies, they will spread that which is false. How many officious liars have we, who tell lies for some good end (as they think?) The highest end is Gods glory; but will ye speak wickedly for God, and talk deceitfully for him? The Vulgar reads the Text, *Numquid Deus indiget vestro mendacio?* It contains a truth, though not the sense of the place: *What! hath God need of your lie?* It is a dishonour to God to be thus helped. And if we must not speak evil, that good may come to God, sure then we may not (whatever the Roman Doctors teach us) speak evil, that good may come to our selves.

How can you think you are Gods Children? God engageth himself for his people, that surely they will not lye, surely they are my people, children that will not lye. Austin long ago gave his judgement concerning lying, that a man must not tell a lye to save the whole world: if it were (saith he) to save thy Father or thy Mother out of Hell, if possibly it could be, thou must not tell a lye, or if it were to save a Kingdom

Kingdom from destruction : And yet to gain a little mirth, or to gain a penny, or to prevent the frowns of a Superiour, how do some teach their tongues to lye ? Not considering, that among the seven things that are an abomination to the Lord, lying is one, yea, (as one observes) he repeats lying twice, though under several names : that all lyers shall have their portion in the burning lake : that herein they are like unto the Devil, who is the Father of lyes, and most unlike unto God, who cannot lye. O then ! put away lying, and speak the truth ; away with mental reservations, and Jesuitical æquivocations ! Let thy tongue be the faithful interpreter of thy heart. Be faithful in your promises and engagements, be not yea and nay. Remember Cicero the Heathen's saying : None but the most villanous will deceive him, who had been safe, if he had not trusted.

Prov. 6. 17.

Rev. 21. 8.

Tit. 1. 2.

Eph. 4. 25.



CHAP. XXVI.

Their Covetousness.

IF there be so much *unrighteousness*, no wonder that there is also much *covetousness* that must not be forgot, when we remember the evil of our ways, Covetousness is the

Professours
Covetous-
ness.

1 Tim. 6.

10.

V. Wells on

Mich. 6. 8.

P. 18.

Mat. 21. 38.

the seed of all unrighteousness, *the root of all evil*. It was *Jezabels* covetousness that made her unjustly deprive *Naboth* of his Vineyard. *This is the heir, come let us kill him, and seize on his inheritance.* *Fl. Etere si neque Superos, Acheronta movebo*, If I cannot prevail with Heaven, I will to Hell, for an Estate is the voice of covetousness : yea (which is more sadly to be considered) this is that which will put men, not only upon injustice to others, but to God himself ; it will make them offer violence to Religion, to Divine honour, and whatever is sacred in the world, all these shall be prostituted to serve the ends of covetousness. That man will stick at no abuse of God, whose God is his gain. How notorious was that of one of the *holy fathers* of Rome, a Pope, *O quantas divitias peperit hac fabula Christi!* O how gainful unto us hath been the fable of Christ ! And is not covetousness and earthly mindedness an *Epidemical* sin ? *Solomon* calls it an *evil disease*. 'Tis called by one *Aurugo*, the yellow jaundice, which makes the sick person look yellow all over. This is the *Grave* which never faith, *it is enough*, but like *Solomons* Horse-leech it cries *give, give*. O ! what boundless appetites have many, who can neither use what they have, nor put a period to what they desire : as in the Sea one wave riseth above another, so here every desire of having is out-gone by a new desire of getting.

Eccles. 6. 2.

Prov. 30.

15.

Are

Are not your great cares for riches ? Do not your thoughts thus run out, O ! how shall I thrive more in the world, get more estate, custome ? but not, O ! how shall I get the favour of God, the pardon of my sins, and victory over my lusts ? how anxious and solicitous are you, every day for the world, but how flat in your coming to have the Image of God renewed ? How dejected are you when you miss of a good bargain ? or when you meet with some loss by Sea or Land ? But how little troubled if you lose an opportunity of communion with the Lord ? How joyous are you when a little of the world comes in ? but how little pleas'd with the galleries, wherein the beloved may be held ? How are men pleas'd with the earth, but find no more relish in Christ and his wayes, than in the white of an egge ? What great journeys have you taken, even compassed Sea and Land, to gain riches ? and hardly can go a mile or two to meet with God ? How is every opportunity laid hold of to get more to the heap ? But do not you remain contented, with the least measures of grace, yea with somewhat below grace ? How oft have you left your meat to serve a Customer ? but when so, to serve the Lord Jesus Christ ? How few design for riches, as a means to carry them to a farther end ? They should be but as the rounds of a Ladder, not to stand upon, but thereby to ascend higher, even to glory, and to the new Hierusalem : But alas ! few desire the world in subordination to God, and as a means to glorifie God ; but the more they

Evidenced
in several
particulars.

Psal. 4. 6.

Note.

Amos 8. 5.

Col. 3. 5.

they love the World, the less God is loved, and the more their desires are carried out after riches, the less after God. *How few pursue earthly things in obedience to Gods call? How many out of a desire of filthy lucre? How few seek the World with an holy indifference? How few reserve their zeal, and hottest endeavours, for heavenly things? Is not the general cry, Who will shew us any good? We need no proof of this, there are instances every where. How, for the getting of a penny, will some debarr themselves of Ordinances? Is it not a sufficient excuse with some, for not attending on the Worship of God, that they met with a Customer, that kept them from the Ordinance? Doth not the Clock strike too fast, whilst thou art selling to advantage? Doth not time run away too fast? Dost thou not wish thou couldst with Jothab cause the Sun to stand still on a Market-day, or on a Fair-day, when trading is quick? But O! The Sexton is blamed for suffering the Clock to stand still on a Sabbath day, and when thou art in the Worship of God, O! When will the Sabbath be gone? When will the Duty be over, that we may sell? How many Hypocritical out-cries are there against the World? O! It eats up my time: O! It eats up my spirits; It robs me of communion with God: We say it is an Enemy, and yet we can bosome this Snake, lodge this Enemy, that God would have us to kill. *Mortifie Covetousness.**

How

How oft hath God charged thee against Covetousness? Take heed and beware of it: Two words to the same purpose, all little enough to take thee off from earthly pursuits. How apparently hath God with-drawn from thee, ever since thou wast taken with this Dalilah? How hardly art thou pul'd out of the deep pit, and miry clay, to Duty, much more to God? And wilt thou be rich? Art thou resolved to run into the bryars? Then farewell to thee, not only in time, but to eternity. How many conditions and impressions of the blessed Spirit have your worldly cares choaked? How have your inordinate desires of riches puzzled your Souls, and diverted them from minding and improving the counsels of God and Conscience? But O! How unreasonable are earthly prosecutions in this day of Gods wrath; When God is plucking up by the roots, now to be seeking great things for our selves, to have Baruck's fore running on us, this makes us the more inexcusable sinners. This is altogether unseasonable, this is no time for it, this is ignoble, yea base. O that we were ashamed of it! We say, The last dayes are perillous dayes; we pretend to expect the Cross, and is this good preparation for the Cross of Christ, to load our selves with thick clay, to crack our Consciences, and thereby to incurr Gods farther displeasure? How unlike art thou to the primitive Converts? Paul, when converted, counts all things but dung in comparison of Christ. And Zachæus no sooner had a work of grace begun upon him, but

Considerations to withdraw the heart from Covetousness. Luk. 12. 15.

Mat. 13. 23.

Jer. 49. ult.

Phil. 3. 8.

down

- down went the World, faster than ever it went up : He parts from riches with more freedom than he sought them : *The half of*
- Luk. 19.8. *my goods I give to the poor ; and if I have wronged any man , I will restore four-fold.* John, the beloved Disciple, affirms, That there is an inconsistency between loving the
- 1 Joh.2.15. *Father, and the World ; and that Who*
- 1 Joh.5.4. *is born of God, overcometh the World : But* alas ! Our hearts are as Cities without walls, the World hath a thorow-fare in them, and may come and go without any Pass from Heaven. *How hath God put a remark of his fore displeasure upon our worldly endeavours ?* We have, to dwell in our cieled houses, neglected Gods house, and said, *The time is not come for the building the waste places, for the restoring the Worship of God, for the building of the house of God ; and how hath God caused many of us to vomit up our sweet morsels, which we rolled under our tongues ? O ! Consider your wayes : Ye have sown much, and bring in little ; ye eat, but have not enough ; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink ; and he that earneth wages, earneth wages to put it into a bagg with holes.* How hath this Sin deadned you to all the Worship of God ? How, by the interposition of this dark body of the Earth, hath the light of Heaven, yea the light of Gods countenance, been darkned ? and how hath thy Soul been benighted and clouded ? They say, If a Knife be put into the Earth, it will lose its edge : I am sure of this experiment, That

Christians,

Christian
for God
World,
nels, an
When t
nels to
hast not
left and
debase
upon t
slave to
God di
thou f
crawl
sordid
the g
gain a
to it
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O, tr
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Christians, who were once lively and active for God, yet by engaging their hearts to the World, they have lost their zeal, their keenness, and their lustre, which once they had. When thou hast gained time from thy business to think of God, and to discharge duty, hast not thou miss'd thine heart? hast not thou left and lost it in the crowd? *How dost thou debase thy self hereby?* The curse of *Cham* is upon thee, a servant of servants thou art, a slave to that which thou shouldst rule over: God did not give thee a reasonable soul, that thou shouldst choose the *Serpents* curse, to crawl and live upon the Earth. O, What sordid practices have some stoop'd unto, for the getting this Worlds riches? *Abah*, to gain a few handfuls of earth, dares walk to it through *Naboth's* bowels. *Judas*, to pocket thirty Pieces, will venture to betray his Lord, and the Lord of Heaven and Earth. O, tremble to think what sad effects your Covetousness may have upon you before you dye. *Demas* left Christ, lost his Soul, shipwreck'd his faith, and all to embrace this present evil world. And if thou make haste to be rich, shalt thou be innocent? Whether thou place thy confidence and hope in thy gold, or in a golden calf, thou art guilty of *Idolatry*, of having other Gods besides the true God, and so dost as highly offend the true God: and God usually gives up such men unto spiritual judgements. It makes me fear you have not tasted of the upper springs, because the puddle of the World is still sweet to your

R

taste.

Prov. 28.
20.

Col. 3. 5.

Rom. 1.
21, 24.

- Luk. 5. 39. taste. No man (saith Christ) having drunk
old wine, straightway desireth new, for he
saith, the old is better, If you had tasted of
the joy, peace, mercy, and comforts of
Christ, your earthly comforts would be dis-
relished: If you did glory in the Cross of
Christ, the World would be crucified to you,
and you unto the World. The sweetness of
Christ would drown all Creature-sweetness.
But alas! To which of us, is one day in Gods
Courts better than a thousand else-where?
Austin said, If one drop of the joyes of Heaven
might fall into Hell, it would drown all the
bitterness of Hell: So would it drown all bi-
tterness in the Soul, and all the sweetness in
the world. Worldly comforts would be
too course, too flat, too low to recreate
your hearts. Did ye but know the honey and
milk of Canaan, ye would not so much mind
the Onyons of Egypt. No man can serve two
Masters: for either he will hate the one, and
love the other; or he will cleave to the one, and
despise the other: ye cannot serve God and
Mammon. O, What a surpassing indignity is
this to Christ, to set him below the foot stool,
to value thirty Pieces of Silver before him,
to prefer Earth before Heaven, present
things before future; that the love of God,
the recompence of reward, shall not lye
nearer the heart, than the treasures of Egypt?
O, What a miserable life dost thou live? This
Sin brings an Hell with it: thou art the De-
vils Martyr. They that will be rich, fall into
temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish
and

Gal. 6. 14.

Psal. 84.
10.

Mat. 6. 24.

Si terram
amas terra
es.
Aug.

1 Tim. 6. 9.

and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. Thou enjoyest neither God, nor the *World*: Thy only happiness is a fancy: And this is thy great misery, that thou still desirest that which will never satisfy thy desires; The more thou hast of the *World*, the more thou wantest: the more thou drinkest, the more thou thirstest: a Drop is upon thee, and thou knowest it not. Discontent is alwayes the Companion of Covetousness. Let your conversation be without covetousness: and be content with such things as you have. Why wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? Grace and Godliness is substance: Why, with Esop's Dogg, wilt thou let go the substance for a shadow? The things of the *World* are fancies, the things of God realities. What good is there to the Owners of riches, saving the beholding them with their eyes? Do not you all this while bear false witness against God; Do not you proclaim to the *World*, that God is not enough to answer, to fill your desires, and that therefore you go out after the Creature? Is it nothing to you, to call God, who is all-sufficient, who is a fountain of living Water, a barren Wilderness? Be astonished, O ye Heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the Lord; for my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water. O Generation, see ye the Word of the Lord; Have I been a Wil-

*Semper
avarus
 eget. Hor.
Heb. 13.5.
Prov. 23.5.
Chap. 8.21.*

Eccles. 5.8

*Jer. 2. 12,
13, 31.*

- derness unto Israel ? a Land of Darkness ? Wherefore say my people, We are Lords, we will come no more unto thee ? Hereby you break the conjugal Relation : God looks on you as Adulterers and Adulteresses, and will judge you accordingly. God expects that his blessing should satisfy you, and that you be alwayes ravished with his love : and dare you tell the World, that your God hath deceived you ? and that you were mistaken in your choice of God ? and therefore after other Lovers you will go ? No wonder, that for the iniquity of our covetousness, God be wroth, and smite us. We are greedy of more, but what have we done with our former talents ? Account we must for one, for two, for ten talents : the more we have, the greater still will be our account. There is a reckoning day at hand.*
- Jam. 4. 4. *O that our moderation were known to all men, because the Lord is at hand. If thou art not sincere, I am as sure as this Book is in thy hand, thou wilt curse the time that ever thou hadst an Estate, and wilt wish thou hadst been a Beggar, for then thou hadst not so much to answer for before God. It is certain (though some doubt it) that thou shalt*
- Prov. 5. 19. *carry none of thy estate away with thee ; nothing is to be carryed away, save guilt, to Hell ; in case of misimprovement of an Estate ; yea, if you have not rendred unto God according to what you have received, the heaping up of wealth, is but the charging of thy account : thou must account, how thou hast disbursed to a farthing. I will suppose thou hast (by*
- Isa. 57. 17. *neg-*
- Mat. 25. 5. *up ca-*
- Phil. 4. 5. *Estate,*
- 1 Tim. 6. 7. *yer,*
- 2 Chron. 32. 25. *Estate,*
- the L-*
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neglects of thy general Calling, and by rising up early, and sitting up late) gained an Estate, thou mayest put all thy gain in thine eye, and never see the worse. What will thy Estate advantage thee, when the Arrows of the Lord enter into thy Soul? What will the World advantage thee, when the Gour, Fever, burning Pestilence, &c. are upon thee? What, hast thou got only that which may stand with Gods eternal hatred? Never count thy gains, till thou hast got that which is inconsistent with Gods wrath. What hast thou got, above that which God throweth unto the Dogs; Shew me Childrens bread, or never boast of thy gains. Did you ever find any Child of God worse for afflictions? but have you not found many worse for their *Deut. 32.* *thrivings in the World? Ishurun waxed fat,* 15. *and kicked.* Whilst you have Bonds and Bills upon others, do not you run into arrears unto God? And how will you discharge those Suits, which God will commence against you? *When you lye a dying, will ye not wish, that your time, your strength, your spirits, had been poured forth upon better things, than those of this life?* That you had traded for Grace and Glory, rather than for the Gold of Ophir, for a little gile Clay? O ye great Projectors for the World, I do even foresee the troubles and horrors, the doubts and fears, the anguish and amazements of your Souls, which your uncertainties, as to your future estate, will put you into, in your dying Rooms. How will you

take up such language as this ; " Fool that I
 " was, to cumber my self about many things,
 " and neglect the one thing necessary ! Fool
 " that I was, to set my thoughts and aff, Gi
 " ons on things below, (none of which now
 " give me a drop of water to cool my tongue)
 " and to neglect the things above ! O, If I
 " had never heard of Christ and Glory, I
 " had been more excusable for my earthly
 Psa. 69. 6. " prolings. O, How have I disquieted my
 " self in vain ? I have heaped up riches, and
 " know not who shall gather them. Had I been
 " as faithful to Christ, as I was to Mammon,
 " O, with what joy might I have removed
 " hence ? What abundant entrance into the
 " everlasting Kingdom might I have had ?
 O, Labour to prevent the horrors of Death,
 and the gnawing Worm of Conscience. It is
 sad, when the Sting of Death, and the Worm
 Conscience, bite the man together. Riches
 Prev. 11. 4. avail not in the day of wrath : but righteousness
 delivereth from death. Believe it, it will cut
 you to the heart, to think, that less pains
 might have served for eternal Life, than you
 have bestowed for temporal Goods. This
 plague attends the covetous man, the more he
 desires, and heaps up, the less he is desired,
 and the less he is lamented when he dyes. He
 is like a Swine, that is good for nothing,
 whilst he is alive ; not good to bear and carry,
 as the Horse ; nor to draw, as the Ox ; nor
 to cloath, as the Sheep ; nor to give milk,
 as the Cow ; nor to keep the house, as the
 Dogg ; but ad solam mortem nutritur, fed
 only

only to the slaughter: So the covetous man doth no good with his riches whilst he liveth; but when he is dead, his riches come to be disposed of. *The riches of a sinner are laid up for the just.* *How can you choose but tremble at Dooms-day?* You cannot desire the coming of Christ: If the Church cryes, *Come Lord Jesus, come quickly*, you cannot joyn in that Prayer, for that your hearts are glued to this present World: You prefer *Paris* before *Paradise*. It is to the Saints loss, to be kept so long from Heaven: but you count it not so. You cannot say, *Thy Kingdom come*. What will you do in that day, when all the Estate and Friends of *Dives* cannot relieve with a drop of cold water? Riches are like *bryars* and *thorns*, good to stop gaps, but not to lay in our beds, and set our hearts upon, lest we lye down in sorrow. Few remember the Devils offer, (*All these things will I give thee*, is the last temptation that old Professors are baited with.) *Take heed therefore and beware of Covetousness.*



CHAP. XXVII.

Their Envy.

ENVY is a Sin seldom confessed, but yet much diffused among Professors. *The Spirit that dwelleth in us, lusteth to Envy.*

Professors
envy.
Jam. 4. 5.

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And indeed *Covetousness* and *Envy* are never asunder: they are sins against the same command: Such as long, that what is their Neighbours, should be theirs, envy to him that which is his: and such as envy to him that which is his, long to have it to be theirs. How desirous are Professors to grasp all to themselves? And therefore how apt are the very best to be envious at the power, greatness, riches, if not goodness of others? Doth not the experience that you have of your own hearts (if you be not strangers at home) testify, that this Spirit is stirring and acting in you? The poor envy the rich, the base the honourable, as if they had the less, because others have so much. Some think that this was the sin that threw down the Angels from Heaven, that they envied *Adams* glory, in that he was made after Gods image, and that they relinquished their glory to divest *Adam* of his: To be sure, the Devil was restless, till he had plunged *Adam* in the same sin and misery, that he was brought into. Sure, maligning the prosperity of others, is not from the Spirit of God. He that giveth freely to all, would not have us to envy those, to whom he gives more freely, than to our selves; and he that giveth us more, doth not envy us for what we have. If you have not so much as others, it is because you are unfit to receive, not because God is unwilling to give. Do not we see how this poyson dis- tureth it self? An early sin it was, if not in the

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the Angels, (as some think) yet it was in Eve : She envied the all knowledge of God, and must forsooth have at least an equality with God himself : It was also strong in the first man, that was born of a woman : and we still suck it with our Mothers milk, and it seldome dyes till we dye. This sin is commonly among people of the same Profession : One Mechanick envies another ; one Merchant another, one Scholar another, one Gentleman another, one Commander another, as *Saul* envied and hated *David*, because the Women sang, that *Saul* slew his thousands, and *David* his ten thousands, one Minister another, as those in *Paul's* dayes, that envied him, and affected an high strain of eloquence, on purpose to obscure that reputation which *Paul* had got among the Churches. And happy had it been, if this cursed sin had dyed in that age, but it hath been still working in all ages of the World.

Is there not a greater promptitude in us, to detract from mens worth, than to credit and exalt them ? To write down their blots and imperfections, than to set forth their due vertues and graces ? If we cannot reach others by imitation, we will by calumniation ; and therefore Luther saith, Envious men feed upon the dung of other men : They are like flies, that love to be upon sores. It is admirable to see, how dull sighted we are, as to the vertues and graces of our Brethren, but quick sighted as Eagles to discern their

Evidenced
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ing from
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Mat. 7. 3.

Readiness
to receive
and spread
defamati-
ons.

Gladness in
their being
brought
lower.

Disliking
their own
enjoyments.

imperfections : The beams of Vertue are not seen, i. e. not taken notice of, but a mote in a Brother's eye is soon espied.

Are we not more greedy to receive and spread any thing, whereby our Neighbour is infamed and obscured, than we are to entertain and diffuse what tends to his praise and glory ? And is not this the reason hereof, viz. the great desire we have to shine alone, and that we would none to vye with us in glory, much less to excell us therein ?

Is there not (oft-times) a secret gladness in our hearts, when some sad Providences afflict others, in their Names, Goods, Health, and Relations, that thereby they may be brought to a level with us, or to an inferiority, in a lower estate ? When you have seen some Congregation wedged in with a concourse of hearers, and yours thin and naked ; and when some have been cryed up for their purity, gravity, activity, and zeal ; and when others have greatened their parts, or estates, and yours rather have been impaired, have ye not been ready even to burst with Envy ? Have you not been glad, when some blot hath attended these, whereby they have fallen in that esteem, which once they had above you ?

There is no Envy in God, and his holy Angels : they rejoyce at our advancement, and at the glory of the humane Nature, that it is so exalted above theirs ; but unhappy we ! that cannot see any excellency in another, but we dislike our own enjoyments, and
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are more vexed at the welfare of our Neighbours, than we would be at our own calamities.

The Beasts do not envy one another, but Men do : yea, the Devils envy not one another : some Professours are herein worse than Devils. No wonder if there have been hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, and heresies, whilest envyings have abounded amongst us. You know the miserable effect of Envy in the first man, that was born of a woman : through Envy Cain hated, and then killed his Brother Abel. Considerations to withdraw the heart from Envy. Gal. 5. 20.

Wrath is cruel, and Anger outrageous, but who is able to stand before Envy? This is so filthy, so shameful a sin, that few will own it : Prov. 27. 4.

Observe the confusions of men in Prayer, and Conference, and you will hardly find a Professour acknowledge Envy. The malignity of this sin appears, in that it strikes directly at the Providence of God, who disposeth of the inequality of mens conditions, according to his sovereignty and wisdom : It hath a tacit accusation of God, for raising up some so high, and laying others so low : It is deeply unsatisfied with Gods bounty to the Children of men, that he gives so liberally to some, whereas he is not bound to any. Whilest others complain against God, for making the World no better, the envious man is troubled, that he hath done so well, for some of his Creatures. No wonder the Apostle reckoneth Envy among the gross sins of Murder, Uncleanneß, Idolatry, Witchcraft, Gal. 5. 19, 20, 21.

craft, &c. and concludes, Heaven is no place for such. *They which do such things, shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.* This is a sin so damnable, and so ugly, making you so much like the Devil, that it is high time you watch against it, mourn for it, and seek its ruine. "O! When shall we hear the Exhortation, Let us not be desirous of vain-glory, provoking one another, envying one another? When shall we in honour prefer one another? When shall we, like Barnabas, When we saw the grace of God, rejoyce? When shall Ministers reprove the Joshuabs, that are envying for their sakes, in Moses words, *I would to God all the people of the Lord did prophesie?* When shall we like John the Baptist, be contented to decrease, so that Christ may increase? and to be laid by, if others more able may be substituted to do Gods work? When shall we rejoyce if God useth others to convert by them, more than by us? and with famous Mr. Dod, I would to God (saith he) that I were the worst Minister in England: his meaning was, that all should excel him in gifts and graces. We pretend to evidences of our conversion from our love to the Saints, but let us hear what the effects of true love are: Love seeketh not her own, love envieth not, love is not puffed up. As love is the fulfilling of the Law, so envy is the dissolution of it. O! when shall we instead of envying our Brother, bless God for him? If he hath more than

" we

Acts 11.

33.

1 Cor. 13.

4. 5.

"we have, more strength, parts, riches,
"honours, graces, &c. the account he must
"pass with God is the greater: let us pity
"him rather than envy him: Believe it, God
"is wiser than we are, and if his distributions
"are various, we have as many talents as
"we can well improve. Let us look to our
"own duty in the places wherein God hath
"set us; and pray for them, that have ten
"talents more than we have, that they may
"serve the Lord ten times more than we can.
"O that thine eye might affect thine heart, that
"thine eye should be evil, because Gods is good.



CHAP. XXVIII.

The sins of Family-Governours.

I. **H**OW guilty are such of you, as have families to govern, of not commanding your household to serve God? Of how few can God say, as he did of Abraham by way of approbation, I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to justice and judgement, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him. By your Authority you should command

Professours
miscarria-
ges in their
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nours, Not
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ing their
household
to serve
God.
Gen. 18 19.

mand them to subject their hearts, wills, and consciences, to the will and pleasure of *Jehovah*; but alas! how many of you have been careless in this? your Children and Servants, yea Wives, must know your Authority upon worldly accounts, you command them (imperiously enough) to fulfill your will and pleasure, to serve you; but how *Gallio-like* are you, little caring whether they obey the Lord?

Being Zealous against disobedience to themselves, not to God.

2. *How much passion have you discovered when Children, and Servants, yea and Wives too, submit not to your will and pleasure? But when do they see so much Zeal against their neglects of Gods work, as they find in you, when they neglect your secular commands? These passions are of a scandalous nature, and may make your inferiours to believe, that you value more your Authority, than Gods, the having your own will to be obeyed, than that Gods requiries should be observed.*

Not caring for the souls of their Families.

3. *How many Professing-Governours are there, that shew great care for the bodies of their Families, but not for their Souls? Meat, and drink, and clothes, or money to buy them, they shall have, but none, or little, instruction.*

Not Catechising them.
Heb. 6. 1.

How little do you Catechise your Families? How seldome do you ask them any questions concerning the first Principles of the Doctrine of Christ? If you do Catechise your Children, as you ought in obedience to those Divine commands: Train up a Child in the way wherein he should go. Bring up your Children

Prov. 22. 6.

dren

children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Ephes. 6. 4.

Yet how few of you do Catechise the rest of your household, your *Servants and Wives*, though they be but *Babes in Religion*, *Children in Understanding*, and this Milk is appointed for Children in *Understanding* as well as *Age* ? Neither doth the work of Catechising them, belong only unto *Ministers* (to them indeed it doth belong as such as *watch* Heb. 13.

for their Souls) but unto you ; for it belongs 17.
 All that have the charge of Souls, and you are charged not only with your Children's, but with your *Servant's*, and with your *Wives Souls*. Whatever any of you may fancy, there never comes a *Wife*, a *Child*, or *Servant* into any of your Families, but with this warrant from the great Lord of Heaven and Earth ; *keep the Soul of this Wife, this Child, this Servant* ; for if it be missing amongst the number of my sheep at the great day through thy neglect in instructing, &c. thy Soul shall go for it. Hence not only should your Children be taught by you, but your *Wives and Servants*. The *Wife* is commanded to *learn of her Husband at Home*, and the *Husband* to *walk with her as a man of knowledge* : and your *Servants* should be trained by you in Religion, as *Abraham's Servants* were by *Abraham*, thus some of the *Hebrew Rabbins* think that *Abraham's trained Servants* are therefore so called.

Gen. 14. 14.
 Not conversing personally with them about their Souls.

How seldom do you converse personally with every one in your Families concerning the *Practical part of Religion* ? How seldom do you ask

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ask them any questions, how it is with their Souls? and what they think will become of them to all Eternity? Are you not as great strangers to the inwards of their Souls, as you are to the Souls of the *Indians*? If their bodies be in danger, meat, phylick, attendance are procured; but their Souls may perish in formality and carelesness for any help you will afford them. Some Professing-Governours never treat with their households about their Spiritual Estate from one year to another: Hence comes the great Apostasy of our times. The Lord humble us, and deliver us from blood-guiltiness. Many an Husband may cry out, O my Wife's Soul is like to perish, through my default: many a Parent may shriek, O I am verily guilty of the blood of my Child: and many a Master may impute to his own account all the disorders of his Servants; for that they have no personal conference with them about Original Corruption, Regeneration, Justification, Sanctification, Glorification, &c. Perhaps thou prayest in thy Family every day, but not knowing the inward lusts and workings of their hearts towards God or Sin, thou knowest not, how to pray as thou oughtest: thou knowest not what to confess, and what to pray for, nor what to bless God for.

Not walking with gravity.

4. *Have you walked with that gravity before your Wives, Children, and Servants, as ye ought? Have you not made yourselves vile by lightness, frothiness, and unseemly carriages? Governours of Families are the Vice-roy's*

roy's of God: thy are in the place of God; and therefore should keep up their *Authority*, and not sinfully run into such vanity and familiarity with their inferiors, as to breed in them contempt of the Ordinance of God.

5. You have given your Children and Servants time to work for your selves, but *have you afforded them time to serve their God in?* Too too many use their Inferiors, just as they use their Beasts; they work and feed their Beasts, but never instruct: no more do they instruct their Inferiors. When do you call your Wives, Children, Servants, into your Closet, and not only press them to look after their Souls, and in order thereunto, to spend some time in Prayer, Reading, Meditation, &c. but tell them how God wrought on you, how he awakened you, what corruptions prevail'd with you, and how God help'd you to crucifie them: How do you know, but the same motives might melt, reduce, and turn their hearts too?

Not giving them time to serve God in.

6. *Have not you miscarried, as to the time, for the management of your religious work, in your houses?* Some Governours Pray in the Morning too early: so early, with a small part of their Family, whilst others are in Bed, or in the service of the World, so that they worship not God together, as they ought: and this is past over with silence; but if they miss of their Servant in the Shop or Field, O! how doth the fire of Hell break forth at their lips? How angry is the Gover-

Taking undue time for Family-Duties. In the Morning too early.

nour? he cries out, O! I shall be undone by the unfaithfulness of my Wife, Children, Servants; but sees not a greater danger, a more probable ruine falling on him for not having his Family to worship God with him.

Too late.

Others defer Morning Prayer till it be almost Noon. They will adventure into all worldly imployments, (as we say) without fear or wit: they see no need of God to protect them from outward or inward dangers, no need of Gods blessing, till they are ready to fill their panch, and then some Collects must be said, some short Prayers; it is the Custom of their fore-Fathers, it is the Religion of their Ancestors, or Conscience will trouble at the total neglect of the Morning Sacrifice, and therefore the Prayer shall be run over with more haste, than the boy that saith his lesson; that they may rise up to eat, drink, and play.

At Evening too late.

And as some are unseasonable in their duties in the Morning, so at Evening. Whilst their strength lasts to serve the world, they attend it, some till even midnight, and then; come let us go to Prayer; when the poor Wife, Children, and Servants, had rather be in bed, than on their knees. The Governour Prayes dully enough, and that while the poor family sleep, or nauseate the duty; and so like Elies Sons, these Sons of Belial cause their people to abhor the offering of the Lord.

1 Sam. 2.
17.

Putting off Family-Prayer with a long grace.

Are there not also some Professing-Governours (unworthy the name of Christian) who think to please God and the family with a long

long grace before meat, which shall be in lieu of all the service of the day?

7. How few are there that read the Scriptures and good books in their houses? O! this will take up too much time; as if God had given men all their time to neglect him in, and to indulge to the services of the Flesh, World, and Devils.

Not reading Scripture and good books.



CHAP. XXIX.

The sins of Husbands and Wives.

Husbands and Wives are called to reflexion on their miscarriages, jointly, severall.

Husbands and Wives sins.

Jointly, for their not being so carefully of their choice; as they should have been: not seeking God enough in a matter of so great consequence, which was for term of life; and wherein the Souls of each other were so highly concerned. *The Wife is bound by the Law as long as her Husband liveth; but if her Husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will, only in the Lord. Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? That they came together upon*

1 Cor. 7.

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2 Cor. 5. 14

low, earthly, and lustful motives, for profit, pleasure, beauty, rather than to further the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Sons of God saw the Daughters of Men, that they were fair; and they took them Wives of all which they chose. That they did not by Prayer and Fasting try to live unmarried, though the Apostle told them of the advantages of serving Christ thereby. He that is unmarried, careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord.

Gen. 6. 2.

1 Cor. 7. 32.

The Husbands sins in not loving as Christ.

Eph. 5. 25.

Hos. 3. 3.

Severally. Husbands, ye have not loved your Wives, as Christ the Church; though the command be express, Husbands, love your Wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, Christ is faithful to his Spouse. I will abide for thee. Thou shalt abide for me many dayes, thou shalt not play the Harlot, and thou shalt not be for another man, so will I also be for thee. But though you have not been Adulterers in any gross act, yet how oft have you wished the bond of marriage were broken? and have not you had eyes full of Adultery? hath not your love to others degenerated into secret lust? Christ is patient to his Church, but hath your love suffered all things? upon light matters, what frowns, I will not say, what blows? Hath not family-prayer been neglected through your wrath? Christ gives no occasion of jealousy; but have not some of you? The Lord searcheth hearts. Christs love is boundless: how short have you kept your Wives, contrary to your engagements to endow them with all your worldly goods? Christ keeps company

pany with the Wife of his bosom ; but have not some of you been more abroad than at home ? Christ edifieth his Church : Do ye dwell with your Wives as men of knowledge ? Christ doth communicate secrets to his Spouse , Are not ye strangers to the hearts, though perhaps not to the bosoms, of your nearest relations ? Christ doth confer often with his Church about the mysteries of God : I wish you did so. I fear some of you are silver tongued abroad, to get you a name, forward to speak of Christ, but dumb at home even to your Wives as well as Children. The Woman learns not, though she ask her Husband at home. Christ gives the sharpest rebukes to his offending Spouse privately, and when he gets her alone ; But do not you reprove before Servants and Children ? Hereby they learn frowardness , when brought into this relation, and at present slight the Wives of your bosoms. Christ doth not blaze his Wives infirmities ; but so have ye. Christ puts the best construction on what his Spouse doth. The spirit is willing, though the flesh be weak. But do not you put the worst ? When your lusts are quenched, your love is gone. Christ doth pity his Church as the weaker vessel ; if ye did so, the family would be the better governed. Christ doth sympathize with his Church : In all her afflictions he is afflicted ; but how froward, churlish, and Nabal-like are you, when the hand of God is heavy on your nearest Relations ? Christ doth vindicate his Spouse, and is greatly displeased when she suffers from the world ; but

2 Cor. 14.
25.

cannot some of you help to deride your Wives? and not frown when they are wronged and abused. Christ doth not upbraid his Spouse with her low condition before he put honour on her; but alas! How oft have ye cast into the dish what the condition of your Wives was before you cast your eyes upon them? Christ gave his life for his Church: what hast thou done and suffered to save the Soul of thy Wife? Christ rules his Church, not with a rod of Iron, but with a Scepter of Love: Is your dominion exercised with discretion and love? Are all things done in Charity? Is she

Prov. 5. 19. to thee as a loving Hind or Roe? Christ doth not count his Spouse as a Servant, but a Friend; he doth not domineer over his Church, but hath high thoughts of her; but how many husbands use their Wives hardly better than Servants? Christ notwithstanding keeps up his authority over his Church, but do not many husbands lose it through too much uxoriousness, and make themselves contemptible, by yielding to their Wives, as Adam to his, whence came at first all sin, disorder, and misery into the world? How did Solomon fall? Christ yields to many of his Wives petitions and suits to him: but many are worse than the Heathen was to his Wife, He said unto her,

Esth. 5. 3. What wilt thou Queen Esther? and what is thy request? it shall be even given thee to the half of the Kingdom. The poor Wife must use the mediation of others to have her desires accomplished. When Christ doth command his Wife, his Church, he doth it mildly:

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We pray you in Christs stead. But many Husbands imperiously enough, too much, God knoweth, when for loves sake they should rather intreat. Christ doth love his Spouse, though he gains nothing by her; but alas! How many are severe enough to their Wives, when they fail of that Estate, &c. that they expected from them?

As Husbands fail, so do Wives; even as the Church is subject unto Christ, so should ye have been to your own Husbands in every thing. But have ye affronted your Light? The true Church of Christ loves him inwardly, as well as outwardly; so should ye have loved your Husbands; but alas! how little have ye shewed the union betwixt the Church and Christ by your affections? The Church loves Christ more than Angels: Whom have I in Heaven but thee? And there is none upon Earth that I desire besides thee. But how many Wives are commending others husbands more than their own? If my Husband were thus, and thus, &c. Thy Husband should be to thee the most precious of all persons, the most lovely in thine eyes. Not parts and gifts, but the good pleasure of God, should be the ground of this special love. The Church honours Christ above all other persons in the world; but have not some of you mean, low and base thoughts of your husbands? The Church is subject to Christ in all things; but will not some of you wear what you please, go where you please, eat what you please, and employ your selves in what you please? Yea,

Wives mis-
carriages,
in not lov-
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Church
Christ.
Eph. 5. 24.
Psal. 73 25.

1 Chron.
15. ult.

though contrary to your Husbands just commands, and meeke entreaties? The Church fears Christ: so should Wives: I say not either should, with a slavish, but both should, with a reverential fear. Remember Michal, She despised her Husband in her heart, (She did not express her slighting of him, as many do, in words) and she had no Child unto the day of her death. God took the Husband's part, and put a remark of displeasure upon that her sauciness. For slighting the Ordinance of God, her Head, (though but in her heart) God plagued her in her Womb with barrenness. The Church loves Christ more and more: but O the decayes of Womens affections to their Husbands! Partly through levity, and partly through age, and partly through crosse Providences! Whereas thou shouldst have kept the Covenant of thy God. The Church doth commend Christ; but seldom are Wives careful herein, to imitate the Church of God. How many do blazon their infirmities more frequently, than commend their graces? The Church is careful to please Christ in all things: The married Woman should care (study) to please her Husband, by her attire, behaviour, words; She should go, speak, and do so, as may render her most acceptable in his sight, in every thing. How many crosse Wives are there, that love to vex, rather than to delight their Husbands? They will cloath and adorn their bodies, to make them lovely to strangers, rather than to their own Husbands. The Church bears patiently re-

Eph. 5. 24.

1 Cor. 7. 34.

Prov. 2. 17.

bukes
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bukes and blows from Christ : so should Wives ;
 as Sarah was commended for her meekness.
 The ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit, is in 1 Pet. 3.
 the sight of God, of great price ; for after this man- 4, 5, 6.
 ner, in the old time, the holy Women adorned them-
 selves, being in subjection to their own Husbands,
 even as Sarah, &c. The Church gives Christ re-
 verend Titles of honour and esteem : but alas !
 Wives are so proud, so self-conceited of their own
 worth and merit, that they cannot but disrespect all
 others, even their own Husbands. Hereby they
 shew not themselves to be the Daughters of
 Sarah ; She having occasion to think of her Gen. 18. 12.
 Husband, presently this title *Lord* came out of 1 Pet. 3. 6.
 her heart into her mouth : and the Holy Ghost
 takes notice of it : yea a second time, sure it
 was for some high end ; and proves that she
 obeyed Abraham, because she called him *Lord*.
 Perhaps the Wife will tell me, these are but
 trifles that I cross my Husband in : I must tell
 thee, to break the order of God for toys and
 trifles will greatly sin at the day of accounts.
 What wilt thou, darrest thou for so slender a
 matter tread down the Law of thy God, and
 hazard the ruine of thy Soul ? O ! consider
 this, and turn not your duties to your Hus-
 bands into matter of talk and pastime, as the
 manner of most Women is.



CHAP. XXX.

*The miscarriages of Professing-Parents
and Children.*

As Parents. **P**arents, O ! how little do you plot for the good of future generations ? how little do you care whether God hath a Name when you be dead and gone, that Christ survive, and holiness flourish, when you shall be rotten in your graves ? O ! 'tis through your default, that the name of Christ is not had in everlasting remembrance : if you were faithful, how would the generations to come bless the Lord in your behalf ? If you were active and diligent, you might convey holiness down to your posterity, as you have been unhappy instruments to convey down a stock of sin, you have been instruments to convey down the curse ; but are not you careless to convey down grace ? The World would soon mend, the Church of Christ would soon regain its antient lustre and beauty, if ye did but faithfully discharge your duties to your Children : you might suffer little Children to come to Christ, yea you might fill the Kingdom of Heaven ; but do not you rather fill the Kingdom of Hell ? And as Jeroboam

boam made Israel to sin, do not you instead of leading them the way to Heaven, lead them the way to Hell? O I consider seriously and sadly how farr you are guilty with respect to the Souls of your Children.

1. By giving them bad examples. Chams Giving their Children bad examples. not covering his Fathers nakedness was a sin conveyed down to all his race, and therefore God chargeth the Church of the Jews against that sin, under the expressions of *walking in the manners of the Nations. Ye shall not walk in the manners of the Nations; which I cast out before you; for they committed all these things.* Lev. 20. 11. & 23. compar. Your pride, sensuality, carelessness in the worship of God, your passions towards your Wives, and Wives towards their Husbands, your srowardness toward servants, &c. teach your Children so to carry themselves towards others. One check't his Son, and said, never Parent had so wicked a Child; yes (said the Son) My Grand-father had.

2. By humouring and cockering your Children in their Sins: Teaching them early to be proud of their fine clothis; and to revenge, Come, give me a blow, saith the Mother to the Child; whilest it sits on her lap. By indulging to his voluptuous course of life, it is thought Isaac smarted in his Sons sature disobedience, even by suffering him to sport and hunt away too much of precious time. Many, like Apes, kill their Children with culling them. Austin tells a sad Story of one Cyrillus, who loved an only Son immoderately, and let him do (without

Prov. 29.
15.

Prov. 13.
24.

Prov. 29.
17.
Prov. 23.
13.

correction) what he would : afterwards this cockered Son, in a fit of drunkenness, offers violence to his Mother, killed his Father, wounded mortally two of his Sisters, and would have ravished another. Through foolish pitty, Parents, especially Mothers, give the reins unto their Children, when they are young, and thereby they grow headstrong, and are *a shame to the Mother that bore them.* The spring of the Rod is the ruine of the Child. Do not you reprove your Children, as old fond *Eli* did ? Thereby he brought a plague upon himself and upon his posterity. What saith one ? never cease convincing or correcting till thou hast subdued the spirit of thy Child, if he contends with thee. You pretend *such harshness is inconsistent with love* ; but I say from the Lord, *such fondness and indulgence is consistent with hatred* ; and I am sure the Lord is on my side, in this. *He that spares his rod hateth his Son, he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.* Is it love to suffer a wound in thy Child to fester (and thereby to destroy him) rather than to apply a painful corrosive for the expediting the cure ? But what saith the fond Mother ? O ! If the Child should be the worse for my correction, it would be a trouble to me whilst I live. O that such a doting Mother would hear the Lord himself ! *Correct thy Son, and he shall give thee rest, yea he shall give delight to thy Soul. With-hold not correction from the Child : for if thou beatest him with the Rod, he shall not dye. Foolishness is bound*

bound in the heart of a Child, but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him. Prov. 22. 15.

3. By not acquainting them with the Lord, and his ways, and that betimes. Hath not God commanded, that his Laws should be whetted by you, upon your Children? *Thou shalt teach them diligently (Hebr. whet or sharpen) unto thy Children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.* Some conceive, that Catechising of Children is not obscurely hinted in this ancient Precept. And is not Child-hood and Youth the time, wherein Solomon adviseth the Children of men should be trained up *in the way wherein they should go?* O Parents! If God be worth your own acquaintance, is he not worth the acquaintance of such as are so near and dear unto you? Can you without trembling think, that as soon as Death breaks up your house you may to Heaven, and your Children must to Hell, and thither through your default? But if you should dye in this neglect of instructing your Children, you will be miserable as well as they: And O! What a greeting will there be hereafter between ungodly Parents and Children? What an hearing will it be to your tormented Souls, to hear your Children cry out against you, *All this that we suffer was long of you, you should have taught us better, and did not:* What an addition will such out-cries be to your misery?

Not instructing them.

Deut. 6. 7.

Prov. 22. 6.

4. By

Suffering
Children
to fall out
with one
another.

Not pray-
ing for
them.

Not cor-
recting
aright.

Being o-
ver-angry.

Eph. 6.4.

4. By *not redressing the disorderly carriage of your Children towards one another.* How few *Rebeccah's* are there? She was careful to remove jars and mischiefs that might arise between her two Sons.

5. By *not praying for your Childrens Souls,* and against those very particulars, which their natural constitution leads them mostly to.

6. By *not correcting them aright* : as to time, not early enough ; He that loveth him correcteth him betimes : not, whilst the fault is fresh in his thoughts, with all the aggravating circumstances thereof ; Not, with compassion enough. You have reason (saith Mr. Dod) to be angry with your selves, rather than to be bitter to your Children ; for you correct your own sin in your Children. If the Child be curst and froward, hath he not seen his Parent brawling and contentious, &c ? *not ushering correction with Prayer,* that God would bless word and rod. Commonly Parents correct in an high passion, whereby Prayer is hindered, and the Medicine becomes invalid.

7. By *being angry without a cause, or above the desert.* Anger must be let out according to the nature of the offence. If Parents be alwayes chiding or correcting, they make their Children resolute, like Hagar and Ismael, to take up their heels, and into the Wilderness will they, and where to be delivered from such hard usages. *Provoke not your Children to wrath.* Some Parents

want

want natural affections : are too severe ; Correction like Physick, if too frequent, will work no more with Children, than our meat with us.

8. By loving your Children more than God, loving them as they are yours, not as they are Gods, as they bare your Image, not Gods, for their beauty and parts, rather than for their graces ; loving a beautiful Child, that is void of grace, more than a deformed Child, though eminent in grace, loving one excessively, as *Jacob, Joseph*, hence *Joseph* is envied by the rest : prodigal favours to some, especially if without reason, are offensive to others, who are less respected : Loving so, as loth to let them go when God calls for them, you cannot say as *Eli*, *it is the Lord, let him do as seems him good*. God pulls and you pull, and you quarrel with God about the goard, and you think you *do well to be angry*. *Job* blessed God, when God took all away at once by one blow.

Loving inordinately.

1 Sam. 3.
18.

9. By not devoting them to some honest calling, but letting them live in idleness, and so they grow up monuments of your neglect. Some Gentlemen train up their Children to hold an Hawk, to follow a Dog, and commonly they dye in an Alehouse, or shorten their lives thereby. But if you do provide a calling for your Children, is it not what is most gainful, rather than what will be most useful to the good of the Soul ? Had you not rather have them rich Factors among Idolaters (where they learn the manners of the

Not providing callings for them, or not the best.

Hea-

Not
matching
them
aright.

Giving
away all
to them.

Heathens) then to have a meaner calling at home, where the Gospel is preached in power and purity?

10. By *not matching them to godly persons*, but rather to the rich: Hereby ye shew that the silver shrines are in higher repute than grace and Godliness.

11. By *giving all to your Children*, though the Church of God hath more need of it. Hereby you evidence that you *prefer not Zion before your chiefest joy*: that you love the outward grandeur of your Children more than the prosperity of the Church. It is a wonder (saith Mr. Baxter) how so many seemingly holy, can quiet their Consciences in such a sin as this is? If one of you have two or three hundred pounds *per annum*, it is a wonder if you leave an hundred pounds a year of it to pious or charitable uses. Nay do not Parents leave all to their Children, when they have apparent proofs that they will spend it in the service of Hell? O! Let Parents tremble. What wilt thou inable and strengthen thy Children to rebell against God? put fuel to the fire? put swords into their hands to fight against the most high?

"Parents I beseech you look diligently to
"your duties, be humbled for these and such
"like miscarriages. O! look about you, and
"you will see a sad Apostasie in Children, Pa-
"rents *civil*, the Children *debauched*: Parents
"godly, the Children *formal* or *loose*: Parents
"eminent for grace, Children *notorious* for
"lewdness. Let your bowels turn within you

"to

"to see so great a degeneracy. Double your
 "diligence, that there may be an holy seed.
 "Knock off the chains of Hell from your
 "Children what you may: lay not out all
 "your time how they may be rich. It is no
 "time to seek great things for your selves;
 "seek them not. Pity the Souls of your
 "Children, that are slaves to the Devil. How
 "can ye mind your trades, fields, bodies,
 "whilst the Souls of your Children are in
 "danger of perishing? How can ye see the
 "Devil driving your Children to Sin and
 "Hell, and ye stand still with a *Galio-Spi-*
 "rit? Go to your Closets, and ask your
 "hearts, whether the Soul be not the prin-
 "cipal part of the Child? and whether that
 "needs not your care more than the body?
 "Do not throw away the Blade to preserve
 "the Scabbard. God hath set you to watch
 "their Souls, to train up their Souls, to pro-
 "vide for their Souls, if you do not, what
 "is your love more than a Pagans, a Turks,
 "towards your Children? You think you
 "should be unnatural if you should not lay
 "up for your Children (though many Pro-
 "fessors upon pretence that God will pro-
 "vide, indulge to the flesh, pamper their bo-
 "dies, and starve their Children) but here is
 "the best laying up to lay up a stock of Pray-
 "ers for them, and a stock of Counsel and
 "Instruction in them. O Parents! Once
 "more I beseech you, put on bowels of pit-
 "ty and compassion. Pity the perishing
 "Souls of your own Children. Command

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"your

Ezek. 16.
20.

"your Children to keep the way of the Lord
 "suffer them not to fashion themselves according to the course of the world. Con-
 "nive not at them in practising what you think
 "is abominable in the worship of God. Re-
 "member they are Gods Children more than
 "yours. *All Souls are mine.* God claims a
 "special right in them, *thy Sons and thy*
"Daughters whom thou hast born unto me. If
 "you neglect your duties, you and your
 "Children are like to have sad greetings,
 "when you meet before the Lord another
 "day. How will your Children lay their
 "hells and torments to your doors? how will
 "they curse the day they were born of such
 "fond women, who indulged to them in
 "their neglects of God? Cursed be the day
 "that ever I saw the passions, the pride, the
 "formality of my Father, or of my Mother;
 "for thereby I learned to sin against the
 "Lord. O your examples undid me! I had
 "not come to this place of torment had it
 "not been for you.

As Chil-
 dren, evi-
 denced in
 several
 particulars.

Col. 3. 20.
 Ephes. 6.
 1, 2, 3.

Children, Are not you also greatly faulty
 towards your Parents? If Children be richer
 than their Parents, *how irreverent are they?*
 how over familiar with their Parents? as if
 they had forgot the first Commandment with
 promise. *How disobedient are they to their law-
 full commands?* though the command of God
 be express, *Children, obey your Parents in all*
things, and it is added, *for this is well-pla-*
sing unto the Lord. *Children obey your Parents*
in the Lord for this is right. Honour thy Fa-
 ther

ther and thy Mother (which is the first Commandment with promise) that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the Earth. Was Christ subject to his Parents, and should not you be subject to yours? Sure you should have obeyed them as far as without sin, though their commands crossed your natural desires: as Joseph, when Israel said unto him, come I will send thee to thy Brethren at Sechem, though he knew he should be sent to them who hated him; yet he said unto his Father, Here am I. How stout and rebellious are Children when corrected? How few can say, we have had Fathers of our flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence? This Sin so provoked God, that he made it Capital in the dayes of old. If a man have a stubborn and rebellious Son, which will not obey the voice of his Father, or the voice of his Mother, and that when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them: then shall his Father and his Mother lay hold of him, and bring him out unto the Elders of his City, and shall say, this our Son is stubborn and rebellious, &c. and all the men of his City shall stone him with stones, that he die: so shalt thou put evil away from among you. How rebellious are Children in refusing the callings which Parents have appointed for them? If the Parent be bound to bring them up to a calling, are not the Children bound to attend that calling? Brethren, let every man wherein he is called, therein abide with God. Christ probably was brought up in his reputed Fathers calling. Is

Luk. 2. 51.

Heb. 12. 9.

Deut. 21.
18, 19, 20, 21.

1 Cor. 7.]

24.

- Mar. 6. 3. *not this the Carpenter ? How disobedient are Professing Children in their marriages ? Children are the Parents goods, so God reckoneth them, yea so the Devil reckoneth them. When the Devil had commission to meddle with Jobs goods, he falls on the Children. Some are worse than Ishmaels, Nature and Civility made him submit to his Mother for the choice of his Wife. If Children much obey their Parents in little, much more in weighty matters. How little have you requited your Parents ? This you are bound unto,*
- Gen. 21. 21. *To shew piety at home, and to requite Parents, is good and acceptable before the Lord. Your Parents took care of you when you were as beasts, you had your life and education from them, and what now slight them when old or weak ? What laugh at their follies ? What when you are high, reject your Parents that are low ? The very Heathen Orator declaims against this ; We are not born (saith he) for our selves, but partly for our Country, partly for our Parents. How are you degenerated from your Parents commands and examples ? There are few true Rechabites, who forbore wine from generation to generation. It makes my heart ake when I read that the people served the Lord all the dayes of Joshuah, and all the dayes of the Elders that out-lived Joshuah, who had seen all the great works of the Lord, that he did for Israel ; but there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, &c. and the Children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim :*
- Tim. 5. 4. *and all the dayes of the Elders that out-lived Joshuah, who had seen all the great works of the Lord, that he did for Israel ; but there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, &c. and the Children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim :*
- Judg. 2. 7, 10, 11, 12, 14.

Baalim : and they forsook the Lord God of their Fathers, which brought them out of the Land of Egypt, &c. and provoked the Lord to anger : and the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers, that spoiled them : and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies.

O ! in vain will ye relieve your selves in your Baptismal relations unto God, that you have Abraham to your Father : Gods judgments will be more bitter to you, more heavy on you, than on others, when the Children of the Kingdom shall be cast out. You will be ready to curse the day you came of such Parents, that ever you had such holy instructions and examples, to no purpose, save to greaten your condemnation. The Lord said unto Moses, This People will go a whoring after the Gods of the Strangers of the Land, whither they go to be amongst them, and will forsake me, and break my Covenant, which I have made with them : Then mine anger shall be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and will bide my face from them, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall befall them ; so that they will say in that day, Are not these evils come upon us, because our God is not amongst us ? Nay, Abraham (whom you trust to, and the Priviledges by him) will upbraid his Son Dives with his former good things : Son, remember that thou in thy life time receivedst thy good things, and likewise

Mat. 8. 11.

Deut. 31.
16, 17.

Luke 16.
25.

Lazarus evil things : but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. O most dreadful ! Your very righteous Parents shall rejoyce in your ruine. *The righteous shall rejoyce, when he sees the vengeance, &c. S. that a man shall say, Verily, he is a God, that judgeth in the Earth.*

Psal. 58.
10, 11.



CHAP. XXXI.

The sins of Professing Masters and Servants.

As Masters.

Not choos-
ing godly
Servants.
Psal. 101. 6.

First you Masters, see how guilty you are in the Relation of Masters.

1. *Should not your eyes, like Davids, have been upon the faithfull of the Land, that they might dwell with you ?* How curious should you have been in this particular ? But alas ! ye would not buy an horse, an house, a Field, but ye would try them ; but how careless have ye been whether your Servants were godly, yea or no ? If they were strong to labour, was not that all ye look'd after ? you look'd that they should be diligent in your work, your interest made you look to that, but have you look'd for such as walked in a perfect way to serve you ? Hence many have been taken into Professors families, who were

were found wanton, and unclean, and thereby Religion hath suffered exceedingly: and others sweet-tongued, gossipping, gluttonous, drunken Servants, and so *Aaron* was devoured by his Dogs: All the Masters gettings have been put into a bag with holes: a just and righteous judgement upon the Master for his preferring self before Religion: yea, (which is a sadder consequent) hence the Children are corrupted by evil example, they being more apt to imitate the servant in his wickedness, than the Parent in his holiness. O, if you had been curious in this particular! had you procured holy servants, by their zeal, forwardness and care of the Children, what families might you have had! All would have been pliable to your holy counsels.

Should you not have removed wicked Servants as soon as all your counsels would not take effect on them? *David* did so. *He that worketh deceit, and telleth lyes, shall not tarry in my sight.* You on the contrary keep them as you do horses, if good for labour. It will never be said to your glory, *the Church in your house*: but may it not be said, *there is a nest of Snakes, a cage of Devils in your house?*

2. *Are not you too rigorous towards your Servants?* Do not you too much frown upon them, as *Laban* on *Jacob*? Do not you use words of reproof in your speaking to them? *Whosoever shall say, thou Fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.* Do not you strike them

Not removing wicked ones.
Psal 101.7.

Being over-rigorous.
Gen. 31. 2, 5.
Mat. 5. 22.

Levit. 25.

43.

Col. 4. 1.

Eph. 6. 9.

Nor directing
them distinctly.

Prov. 31.
27.

Nor being
diligent
themselves
in their
company.

unnecessarily or immoderately? Have you forgotten the commands from Heaven? Thou shalt not rule over him with rigour, but shalt fear thy God. Masters, give unto your Servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a Master in Heaven. And ye Masters, forbear threatening, knowing that your Master also is in Heaven, neither is there respect of persons with him. Do you herein as you would be dealt with? Would you have God to deal with you, as you deal with your Servants? Remember, you and your Servants have one and the same Master, to whom you are both accountable, you for your rule, and they for their subjection.

3. Have not you neglected to give that direction to your several Servants, as is proper for them, so that they intrench upon each others work, and the painful work lies neglected, to your trouble, and to the raising of strife and passion? How few Mistresses, yea or Masters, are like Solomons vertuous Woman, of whom it is said, *She looketh well to the wayes of her household*? Every one should know his place and work in the Family, that all things may be done decently and in order: But in how few Families is it thus?

4. Do you give your Servants examples of diligence? So did that vertuous Mistress: *She riseth also whilst it is night, &c. She girdeth her loyns with strength, and strengtheneth her arms: She layeth her hands to the Spindle, and her hands hold the Distaff: She*

ou for-makesh her self coverings of Tapestry: She maketh
 fine Linnen, &c. She eateth not the bread of
 idleness.

5. What love do ye shew to your Servants
 that be godly? Do you receive them as be-
 loved Brethren? As Paul would have Phile-
 mon receive his Servant, after his Conver-
 sion: Receive him not now as a Servant, but
 above a Servant, a Brother beloved. A Chri-
 stian Servant should be in the place of a be-
 loved Brother, and should be preferr'd be-
 fore a lewd Son. A wise Servant shall have
 rule over a Son that causeth shame: and shall
 have part of the inheritance among the Bre-
 thren. How seldome do you shew them
 good, as well as receive good from them?
 When they are sick, how little attendance
 and necessaries have they as to diet, fire, and
 physick? Are not too many like the *Amala-*
kite, who left his man on the plain fields, be-
 cause he fell sick? How are many poor Servants
 (who contracted their diseases by the un-
 merciful commands of some Professours) cast
 off by them when sick as unprofitable bur-
 thens?

Not shew-
 ing special
 respect to
 those that
 are godly.
 Philem.
 16.

Prov. 17.2.

1 Sam. 30.
 13.

6. Do you pay your Servants their wages?
 Do you not pay them dodgingly? Hast thou
 not forgot that the Israelites were required,
 when they set any servant free, not to let
 him go away empty, but thou shalt furnish
 him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy
 floore, and out of thy wine-press: of that
 wherewith the Lord thy God hath blessed thee,
 thou shalt give unto him? Hast not thou aba-
 ted

Not paying
 wages as
 they ought.

Deut. 15.
 12, 13, 14.

Not suffering them to speak.

Job 31. 13.

ted them of their dues for the time of their sickness, or the time they have spent in the service of God?

7. Do not you deny liberty to your Servants to speak unto you? Job would not slight his Servants cause. God hath set Masters over Servants; but he hath not given them liberty to trample them under their feet. Servants are under their Masters power, but not their lusts. You shew your selves Nobles by this churlishness and austerity. He is such a Son of Belial, that a man cannot speak to him.

Suffering tyranny among them. As Servants.

Being apt to think, that they must be subject to none but Christ.

8. Do not you suffer one Servant to tyrannize over another?

Secondly, You servants that Profess; I have somewhat in charge against many of you.

1. Your Pride, saueiness, familiarity with your Governours, make me think you would easily swallow the error of old, that we are to be subject to none but Christ, as if your freedom by Christ, had exempted you from all civil subjection to men. By your refusing the yoke of your Masters commands, you reflect more upon your Master in the Heavens, than upon your earthly Governour: What saith the Apostle? Let as many

1 Tim. 6. 1.

Servants as are under the yoke, count their own Masters worthy of all honour; that the name of God, and his Doctrine be not blasphemed.

Eph. 6. 5.

Servants, be obedient to them that are your Masters according to the flesh with fear and trembling in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ.

Christ. Servants, be subject to your Masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.

But alas ! how saucy are Servants ? May not your Master say, If I be a Master, where is my fear ? How fearless are you of your Masters, especially if your Masters be not very rich and honourable in the earth ? who respects Gods Ordinance ? Hence many Professing Servants stand covered in their Masters presence, sit before them, bow not to them, nor rise up before them.

2. Do not you when you meet together blazon the infirmities of your Masters ? Do not you carry your selves as Spies rather than as Servants ? you do not herein as you would be dealt with.

3. Are not you disobedient to your Masters commands, unless in what pleaseth you ? You are the Servants of your own lusts, rather than your Masters Servants : you do not obey in singleness of heart, yea, you are not indeed obedient. The Centurion could say to his Servant, go, and be went, &c. The Heathen Servants excell some that pretend to great attainments of Religion. He is the Master, that must have his own way ; Judge ye then in your selves, whether you abide in the place, wherein God hath set you ?

4. Do not ye refuse to answer when you are called by your Masters ? This was Job's plague, I called my Servant, and he gave me no answer. Silence is sometimes a sign of consent, but here of contempt. If a Servant answers not,

Carrying themselves proudly, saucily, and too familiarly with their Superiours. Mal. 1. 6.

Blazoning their Masters Infirmities.

O obeying them only in what they please. Col. 3. 22. Tit. 2. 9. Mar. 8. 9.

Not answering, when call'd. Job 19, 16.

not, when he is called, he forgets what he is calling is. The Servants in Davids days were of better dispositions, they did pick out their Masters mind out of every motion and turning of his eye, and hand, and foot, and were continually in a posture for obedience.

Psal. 123. 2.

1 Tim. 6. 1.

The eyes of Servants look unto the hand of their Masters, and the eyes of a Maiden to the hand of her Mistress. For want of that honour that is due from Professing Servants to their Masters, the name of God is Blaffhemed.

Answering again.

Tit. 2. 9.

5. As some by silence, so others by their tongues dishonour their Masters by answering again. They should not answer by way of contradiction, or reluctance, as Servants are very apt to do. Some will even brag, how they gave word for word (perhaps blow for blow) nay two words for one. Hereby their Governours, if ungodly, fall foul upon Religion. *Is this the fruit of your profession? prayers? running after Ministers?*

Diligent only under their Masters eye.

Eph 6. 5, 6.

Not designing to please God in their pleasing their Masters.

6. How lazy are some professing Servants? Diligent only when under their Masters eye. Few serve their Masters, as *Jacob, Laban, with all their might.* The command is that you should obey in singleness of heart, not with eye-service as men pleasers. Mark, eye-service stands not with uprightness of heart. As you would not be branded for Hypocrites, work behind your Masters backs, as if their eyes were upon you. Consider how short you fall of this, and mourn before the Lord in secret for your eye-service.

7. How do some, yes many servants, eye

only the pleasing their Masters, but do not Eph. 6. 5.
 their work so spiritually as to seek to please the Tit. 2. 9.
 Lord? Not with eye-service, as men-pleasers,
 but as the servants of Christ, doing the will
 of God from the heart. It is true, Servants
 should labour to please their Masters, yea in all
 things; but they should seek more to approve
 themselves to God, than to any earthly Su-
 perieur.

8. *How imprudent are some Professing ser-* Mis-timing
vants as to the timing of their duties? Some, duties.
 when never so urgent business is to be dis-
 patcht will then go in secret to call upon
 God; whereas going to bed later, and rising
 earlier, would prevent much straitness as to
 time, and spirit in that great duty: Some
 will fall a talking of the things of God to their
 fellow-servants very unseasonably, not when
 they are at leisure, but when they are most
 busily employed for their Masters, to the hin-
 dring of their work.

9. *How many cheat and defraud their Masters?* Defrauding
 Some cheat them of their time, by idling it their ma-
 away, being tattlers, and busie-bodies, or sters.
 gossipping it away: Others cheat them of their
 money or goods, hiring others secretly to do
 their work, and pay them with their Masters
 money or goods. Is not this purloyning?
 and therefore forbidden?

10. *How many are improvident for their* Tit. 2. 10.
Masters goods and gain? They will see things Not pro-
 spoil before their eyes: they will give what vident for
 is not their own to give: they make no con- their gain.
 science to eat and drink what their Masters
 do

do not allow them : they are not content with his allowances : they will steal small matters, and yet whatever they take, though but little, is the breach of the eighth Commandment, and the less the temptation, the greater the sin, that they will break God's Law for trifles : and serve the Devil for pieces of silver, and morsels of flesh. What

saith Mr. Dod? " If ever they look for sound peace of conscience, they must make re-
"stitution of all such things : How much
"soever they steal, so much they must restore,
"and the fifth part thereto, or if they keep
"it, unless they repent, they keep God's
"curse with it, and a woe unto their Conscience-
"ences.

Numb. 5. 7.

Zeck. 5. 4.

Regardless
of their
Souls.

11. *How many are altogether careless to get any good to their souls whilest under Religious Governours? They ask not the way to Heaven, and if examined, they are tongue-tied, will give no account of the hope that is in them.*

Murmuring at re-
proofs and
corrections.

1 Pet. 2.

18, 19, 20.

12. *How do many murmur under reproofs and corrections? What saith the Apostle? Servants be subject to your Masters, not only to the gentle, but to the froward; for this is thank-worthy, if a man for Conscience towards God endure grief, suffering wrongfully : for what glory is it, if when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently : this is acceptable with God.*

Unfaithful
to Chil-
dren.

13. *How unfaithful are many to their Masters Children? Not heeding them, and providing*

providing meat, and other necessaries for them in their Masters absence ?

14. *How scornfully do even Professing-Servants receive a Catalogue of their duties ?* How loth are they, yea how do some hate, to know the mind of God, as to the extent of their obedience ?

Receiving scornfully a Catalogue of their duties.

15. *How many ways do you sail towards your fellow-Servants ?* Do not you seek to undermine them of the respect their Masters bare them ? Do not you labour to supplant them ? Do not you envy them ? Are not you unfaithful to one anothers Souls ? Do not you waste time in idle and impertinent discourses ? Are not you evil examples to each other ? Do not you suffer sin to rest upon each other ? are not you guilty of not easing and relieving them, when they are overcharged with business ? Do not you carry your selves proudly and magisterially towards Apprentices ? Do not you joyn in a confederacy to tell tales against your Governours ? And do not you charge your fellow-Servants with secrecie therein, whereby the Name and Authority of the Master is lost, and all hopes of edifying are taken away ?

Their miscarriages toward their fellow-Servants.

CHAP.



CHAP. XXXII.

Their miscarriages with reference to the Ministers of Christ, whilst they were resident with them.

Professours
miscarri-
ages to-
wards Mi-
nisters be-
fore their
removal.
Not
esteeming,
but flight-
ing them.
1 Thef. 5.
13.

I. **H**OW little have you esteemed them, and how much have you slighted them? Though they were the Embassadors of the Lord of Heaven, and should have had respect, according to the rank of their Master, that sent them; yet how little did you honour them in your hearts? Did you know them, and esteem them highly, for their Works sake? Have you not very much slighted both their Persons and Message? How many have thought they knew as much as their Ministers, and therefore under-valued them? How many Ministers have been slighted for their mean Parts? As if the efficacy of the Ordinance depended on the Rhetorick of the Preacher: as if no dainties could be brought them in a homely dish, no treasure in an earthen vessel: as if God could not speak out of the mouths of Babes: as if the using Jordan were too contemptible a means? I have feared the unsoundness of many hearts from

from the itching of their ears: Paul was careful to preach not with enticing words; with the wisdom of words: Though he could speak with tongues more than all, yet he desired to speak rather to edification. It is likely your Ministers could have been Seraphical, and in the clouds, but they stooped and descended to your capacities, and denied themselves that they might gain you: more desiring that you should be brought in love with the naked truth of the Gospel, than with the dress it comes in; But nothing hath pleased your squeamish stomachs, but meat so sawced: you have loved the meat for the sawce, when there was no sawce you cared not for the Sermon, and when the sawce was gone you were weary of the Sermon; you would have no more of the meat. A Sermon full of plain naked Scriptures would not down in our last times: We were Christ-glutted, Gospel-glutted. It's observed by an Historian, that before the great Massacre in France, the Protestants were for a lascivious wanton kind of Preaching. Truly (saith one of our own about 18. years since) We cannot absolutely determine what will become of us: only we have cause to fear that conscientious Sermons, as much despised as they are, may be a commodity dear enough in England ere long, and visions may be less open, that they may be more precious. How unworthily have the Ministers of Christ been slighted by even such Professors, who a little before, pretended at least, to have had their life and growth from them, and that

1 Cor. 14.
18.

1 Sam. 3. 6.

that they were the *Seals of their Ministry*, that they were begotten and bred up under their shadow; and yet in process of time have had low, mean, base and unworthy thoughts of them, debased them as *brats of Antichrist*, as *limbs of Babylon*? Have not many eminent Professors been ready to entertain reports against their Ministers? and have they not lost their esteems of them for one *real or supposed* weakness of theirs? though you have been under so many engagements to them for your spiritual life, &c. yet if you have seen a little failing or miscarriage in them, have not you forgot all their worth, and all their many years labours and cares for your eternal welfare? Have not you been so far from esteeming the Messenger for the Message, that you have slighted the Message for the Messenger? Hath not this been the language of your hearts, if not of your mouths, *What nothing but this preaching*? Have not those that at first admired, afterwards made nothing of this Heavenly Manna, because of the commonness thereof? When pearls were common among the *Romans*, they wore them upon their Shooes. Hath not even the *pearl of the Gospel* been trodden under foot by you? Have not you considered only the *matter*, and not the *stamp of the Coin*? Have not your Ministers, though they have not kicked the dust of their feet against you, yet oft complained to God of the contempt you have put upon them, and how much their Embassy hath been undervalued by you? It may be

*uniones
emergere e
luto cupiant.
Tert.*

you

you have thought it was no great matter to slight them and their counsels : but know for your trembling and amazement of Spirit, therein you have slighted Christ himself. *He that despiseth you, despiseth me.* May you not fear it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of Judgement, than for you ?

Luke 10.
16.
Matth. 10.
15.

3. *How full of undue prejudices have your hearts been against your Ministers ?* and you have not had the honesty to examine the grounds ? When they have delivered truths of a sublimer Nature, than ordinary ; or have delivered any thing more obscurely, than at other times, how rarely have you confer'd with them thereabout ? Have not you gone among your Companions and fill'd your own and their hearts with prejudices against them ? When they have insisted long upon one subject, have not you been offended ? But when did you ever cry out of others for being too long telling Money to you, for spending too many hours therein ? Hereby you have done the Devil as great a piece of service as any you could have done him in your life time. Let me publish that to thine eye, which was once whispered in the ear : *Take heed what thou doest, this man is a Roman ;* Should not you much more have taken heed of filling your own and others hearts with prejudice against your Ministers, seeing they were the Prophets of the most high : these men were men of God : they were the special Ambassadors of Heaven ? I think he said

Prejudiced
against
them.

well, that Prejudice against the Preacher is the great prejudice to the hearers. This Fever of prejudice hath made many, like the full stomach, to loath the honey-comb. Hath not God met with repulses, whilst your Ministers have been entertained with prejudices? So long as you have been prejudiced, though you were convinced of many duties, yet you have not been perswaded to obey the truth. This hindered the Jews from closing with Christ, and made their house desolate, over-turned their Temple, so that a stone was not left joyned to a stone: it brought a kind of Dooms-Day on them.

Not blessing God for them.

3. How little have you blessed God for the Gospel-Ministry which you have enjoyed? and yet hath it not been the best under the Cope of Heaven? This distinguishing Mercy did not affect your hearts as it ought. Some there were (but very few) would say, *Brown Bread, and the Gospel, is a Feast.* Few, like the Christians at Constantinople, cryed out, *Better the Sun not shine, than Chrysofome be silenced.* You could bless God for Health, Estate, &c. but not for these great Luminaries of Glory, who were appointed to conduct and guide you unto the Heavenly Jerusalem.

Not praying for them.

4. How little did you Pray for them? How little have you prayed for gifts and abilities to go through their whole work, for preservation for them, and for a sanctified use of all Gods dispensations toward them? How little did you deprecate the stopping of their mouths,

mouths, and supplicate that their mouths might be kept open, and that utterance might be given unto them, that they might open their mouths boldly, to make known the Myſterie of the Goſpel? Have not they oft begg'd your Prayers, in the words of Paul, *I beſeech you, Brethren, for the Lord Jeſus Chriſts ſake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye ſtrive together with me, in your Prayers to God for me, that I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judea (in England?) and yet have not you neglected to call upon God for their deliverance? How can you tell, but their mouths had ſtill been opened, had not you neglected Prayer? Hath not Chriſt promiſed, Knock, and it ſhall be opened unto you: To him that knocketh, it ſhall be opened?*

Eph. 6. 19

Rom. 15. 30, 31.

Mat. 7. 7, 8.

5. Have not you made ſorry Excuses for not hearing them? How little have you believed that Word, *He that heareth you, heareth me?* And by conſequence, that not-hearing of them, was not-hearing of Chriſt himſelf. What ſlight excuſes have been deemed ſufficient to keep you from the *Shepherds Tents?* The Apoſtle would have us *Swift to hear*: Jam. 1. 19
Swiftneſs notes diligence in taking the firſt occaſion; but how have you, to complement with a Friend, to indulge to the fleſh, for fear of a little rain, for fear of wetting your feet, for fear of loſing a fix-penny, yea a penny-Customer, declined ſeveral opportunities of attending the Embaſſadors God ſent you? For theſe things the wrath of God is breaking out upon you: the day is come,

Making
Excuses
for not
hearing
them.

Amos 8.

12.

Cant. 5.

3, 6.

Their miscarriages before, in and after hearing, Before, Hearing without antecedent meditation.

Isaiah 55.
20, 11.

Prayer.

or coming, when ye shall wander from Mountain to Hill, from Sea to Sea, and seek bread and find none. This very excuse, the fear of defiling her feet, would not serve the Spouse.

6. How did you miscarry, both before, and in, and after hearing? How slender was your preparation to attend upon these Deputies of Christ? How little did you meditate on the Word you were to receive at their lips? Did you thus consider? The Gospel that I am about to hear, will be the savour of life unto life, or of death unto death: I shall be nearer Heaven or Hell by this Sermon I am going to: If the Gospel be alwayes bid, I am a lost Soul and shall perish: is my Soul hungry? This is the bread of Heaven: Is my Soul thirsty? this is the water of life: this is the milk whereby I must grow up unto eternal life: this messenger of Heaven will be for the fall as well as the rising of many in Israel: If he be not instrumental for my Salvation, he will be for my Damnation: As the rain cometh and watereth the Earth and returneth not thither, &c. So shall Gods Word that goeth forth out of the Ministers mouth, not return unto him void. How little did you consider the excellency and necessity of the Word that you were to partake of? What treasure was afforded you in an earthen vessel? That the Truths and Doctrines that your Ministers taught you, were of as much worth, as your Souls, as Heaven as Salvation?

How little did you pour out your Souls in Prayer unto God before you went to hear your

Ministers? Either for your Ministers, that God would open their mouths to speak the word truly, sincerely, powerfully, and seasonably, and suitably to your condition: or for your own Souls, that God would open your hearts, to entertain the word so as to profit by it, that you might not have open ears, and shut hearts, that you might not have ears, and yet hear not, as knowing that the hearing ear, and seeing eye, the Lord hath made even both of them? Prov. 20. 12.

How careless were you to purge your Souls before you came to hear the word? Moses before he was to hear God speaking put off his shoe, to intimate that you should put off your carnal and earthly affections before you come to hear Gods word; But have not you rush'd out of your worldly employments to many a Sermon? How careless were you to lay apart all filibiness, and superfluity of naughtiness, that you might receive with meekness the engrafted word; which is able to save your Souls? If you have not come without habitual; have you not neglected actual preparation? Putting off the shoe. Jam. 1. 21. Eccles. 5. 1.

When you have been actually under the Ministry, Have not you heard irreverently? without awful apprehensions of Gods Majesty and presence? Have you said of the place where any Minister of Christ hath preached unto you, as Jacob of Bethel, how dreadfull is this place? Have you in your hearing Sermons set your selves in the presence of God, as Cornelius did, when Peter was preaching unto him? In hearing irreverently. Act. 10. 25.

him? The King of Moab will rise up in judgement, to condemn the irreverence of many of our Professors; when *Ebud* told him, *I have a message in thee from God: the King arose from his Throne, and bowed himself.*

Carelessly.

Have not you evidenced your irreverence in hearing carelessly, dully, drowsily, sleepily, &c. Have not you lent a more attentive ear to a Tale, to a Fable, to a Romance, to a Ballad, to a Stage-Play of several hours length, than to a Sermon of an hour? Have not you come to Church, as to an Apothecaries Shop, for a receipt to sleep? Hath not the Gospel come unto you in word only, and not in power? When the Minister threatened you from the Lord, could you say, *My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy righteous judgements?* How many months and years did Gods Servants threaten you with a Famine of hearing the Word of the Lord? but did this Judgement fright you, and humble you, whilst it lay in the cloud of the threatning, as the least appearances of an outward Famine have awakened you? When your Ministers came with the tydings of Peace to you, were *their feet beautiful?* May not your Ministers complain of you, as *Christ of the Jews, My Word takes no place in you?* So carelessly have you been of any thing that hath been spoken to you by them, though in the Name of the Lord. When your Ministers declaimed against your sins, did you so mind what they delivered, as to

John 8. 37.

any whit troubled ? Did you not *harden* Zech. 7.
your hearts as an adamant ? Were you not so 11, 12.
 from being troubled for your sins, that
 was your only trouble, you could not
 commit them without controul ? Were you
 not even troubled with admonitions and
 counsels, commands and threatnings, that
 cross you in your sins ? Can you say, that
 you *Received the Word with all readiness of* Acts 17. 11.
mind ?

Have you not heard heartlessly ? without a Heartlessly.
 real sense of your want of the Word, and
 without an appetite to it ? Had you such ve-
 hement desires after the treasure your Mini-
 sters were bringing you, as covetous men
 have after the treasures of the Earth ? Could
 you ever, with *David*, say, *My Soul breaketh* Psal. 119.
for the longing that it hath unto thy judgements 20.
at all times ?

Have not you heard unbelievably ? Not Unbeliev-
 crediting your Ministers Doctrine, and not ingly.
 applying it to, but shifting it off from your
 selves ? Have not their Sermons been there-
 fore unprofitable to your Souls, because not Heb. 4. 2.
mixed with Faith ? Can you say, that you
 received *their Word, as the Word of God* ? 1 Thes. 2.
 That you applied it to your Souls, as that 13.
 which concerned you ? May not we say,
 with grief of Soul, as our Lord hath said
 already, *You have not heard his voice at* Joh. 5. 37.
any time ? When you heard the Word,
 which is Gods Word, did you hear God
 himself speaking his own Word unto your
 hearts ?

Have

Have you not been cautioned by the
 Jesus Christ, and by his Ministers, *what*
 Luk. II. 18. *Take heed how you hear ? And yet how*
 Carpingly. *have you heard the Ministers of Christ*
ingly ? Not with a willingness to be
by the Word, but to judge it, and
Preacher for it ? Have not you let slip
most material passages of the Sermon,
pitch'd upon the weaknesses or impertin
cies of the Minister ? How oft have
when you could not blame the subject
rer, found fault with the method, and
manner of delivery ; and over-looked
wherein your Souls were especially
concerned ?

Non obe-
 diently.

Have not you heard Non-obediently ?
not you been untractable and unteachable
Have you not heard proudly, and not
bly ? With hard hearts, and not with
of flesh, ready to receive the impress
the Word, and willing to be moulded
fashioned according to it ? When could
say to any of Gods Ministers, as Cornelius
Peter, We are all here present, to hear all
is commanded of God ? When wast thou
such an yielding Spirit, as Saul was of, Luk
 Acts 9. 6. *What wilt thou have me to do ? His ear*
 Job 34. 32. *heart was open to every command : So*
Job's, That which I see not, teach thou me
Have not you had your Exceptions ? If
Ministers have enjoyn'd you to pray in your
families, perhaps you heard them therein ;
if they enjoyned from the Lord (the same
Legislatour) that you pray in your Closets
that

that you examine your selves, that you fill your hands with both the Tables, they could not be heard; one reserve at least: Where the right hearer cries out, Lord, *What wilt thou have me to do?* I will do any thing, Lord, *actively or passively*, to get Hell out of my soul now, and to keep my soul out of Hell hereafter.

After hearing the Embassadors of Heaven, how faulty have you been? In not examining what you have heard by the written Word? The Brethren consulted with the Oracles of God, brought the Doctrines they heard to the measuring Line of the Sanctuary; but so have not you: They say, a man will tell money after his Father; but you have been too careless, to tell over the Doctrines you have heard. How many were there, to whom the reputation and worth of the Teacher, was sufficient proof of his Doctrine, receiving all that was stamp'd with his tongue? Have not you called such and such a Minister, *Your Father on Earth*, in the same sense in which Christ forbids it? *Have not you had the Persons of men in admiration, and that for advantage?* No wonder that Errours have abounded. Men, that through an over-esteem of the Minister, take all upon trust, or through sloth will not examine Doctrines, are like to be deceived.

After, Not examining what they have heard.

Mat. 23. 9.

Jude v. 16.

May not Christ check you, rather than the Disciples, with, *Why do you not remember?* Have not you heard the Word, and instantly forgot

Not remembering it. Mar. 8. 18.

- forgot it? hath not the Word gone in at one ear, and out at another? have not you *slip the Word*? The word *παρρησιάζομαι* is metaphorical, taken from a Sieve, or leaking Vessel, when the liquor runs out as fast as it is put in. Have not you hereby been *learning, but not come to the knowledge of the truth*? Your Memories should be like the Ark, wherein the Pot of Mannah was kept; but alas! When you heard the Word, there came the wicked One, and cateched away what was sown in your hearts: and was not the Word, and the labours of Christs Ministers fallen so low, that you were contented, at least little troubled, thus to be pillaged of this heavenly treasure?

Not meditating on it.

Lev. II. 3.

Luk. II. 25.

Have not you neglected Meditation upon the Word you have heard? It was one special way, whereby, in time of the Law, the clean Beasts were known from the unclean, *chewing the cud*. But how few ruminate upon what they have heard and received? They do not, with Mary, keep the sayings, and ponder them in their hearts. Blessed are they, that hear the Word, and keep it. How few retire into their Closets, and reflect on the usefulness of the Word, for the nourishment of their graces, for the destruction of their sins? How few consider, whether they have met with God in the Sermon, yea or no? You should have gathered up the words of Christs Minister, as Christ said of the fragments, *so as none should be lost*; or as the Gold-smith looks after the very dust of gold:

but

Their miscarriages towards Ministers. 317

But as soon as Conscience was quieted, did you ever think more of the Word?

How few have gone from the Church to the Closet, there to pour out their souls for a blessing upon what they heard? From the Pulpit to the Trade is bad; but from the Pulpit to the Ale-house, that's abominable: but all are not clear herein. O! If when your sin was discovered; you had gone into your chambers, and begged humiliation for it, and victory over it; and if when neglected duty was pecc'd in publick, you had retired, and prayed to God to incline your hearts to keep Gods statutes, would it not have been better with you, than now it is?

Have not you neglected to talk of what you have heard? Have not some, as soon as dismissed from the Sermon, fallen into impertinent discourses; about news and trifles, or into worldly business; and so the thornes aboard'd all the convictions, which they received under the Ministry? They consider not, that the Word they have heard, hath been the savour of life, or of death; and that every one that goes from a Sermon, goes off either with God, or the Devil, in his company.

Have not you been hearers of the Word only, and not doers of it? Have not you so deceived your own selves? Your Ministers have press'd you to secret Prayer, and to constancy in it; but have not you gone away, and continued in the neglect of that, wherein the power of godliness, and heart-sincerity mainly consists?

Not praying over it.

Not talking of it.

Mat. 13.
7. 22.

2 Cor. 2.
16.

Not practicing it.
Jam. 1. 22.

Luk. 11. 28.

listis? Blessed are they that bear the Word of God, and keep it, i. e. that are good Practitioners, that have a conscionable care to regulate heart and life according to what they hear and know: They are rather blessed than the Mother of Christ was, for bringing him into the World: Christ puts a rather upon the good Practitioner, than upon the Virgin Mary. But alas! Let it be for a lamentation, that so many Professours have been for hearing; but for doing only what

Ames 8.

5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

they list: Saying, When will the new Moon be gone, that we may sell Corn? and the Sabbath, that we may set forth Wheat? Making the Ephah small, and the Shekel great, and falsifying the Ballances by deceit? That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea, and sell the refuse of the Wheat? The Lord hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, Surely I will never forget any of their works.

Mat. 21. 43.

Luk. 12. 43.

Shall not the Land tremble for this, &c? The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a Nation bringing forth the fruits thereof: But Blessed is that Servant, when his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing. When did you find the Glasses to discover and amend your Spots? Have you been cast into the Form of the Doctrine, which ye have received? Have you obeyed from the heart the Form of Doctrine delivered to you? Hath your profiting appeared answerable to the many months and years you have sate under the Dews of Heaven? What do you know more than you did before? What do you believe,

and hope for, more than you did? have
 your hearts and lusts stooped more and more
 to this Scepter of Christ? Believe it Sirs, If
 be not more odious, and Christ more sweet
 and precious, after you have been in the Shep-
 herds Tents, you have lost your bearing hours,
 upon a contracted more guilt to your souls. That
 you have not been changed from glory to glory,
 a *Lea* a great stain to the Ministry, and a great
 hand-ground of sadness to the poor Ministers, who
 what ear they have laboured in vain. And yet
 have not you been such unprofitable hearers,
 that Seekers, Ranters, and Quakers, have
 took occasion to cry down the Office of the
 Ministry, as a Cheat, as an old Almanack
 out of date; because they have seen how un-
 successful the labours of Christs Ministers
 have been upon your Souls? If you had come
 down from these Mounnts with your faces
 shining, if you had received more of God
 upon your hearts and lives, you had more
 credited the Ministry, and put to silence
 these foolish men. What shall I say? A
 worse Famine is coming on Professours, than
 what happened to *Egypt*, and if you have laid
 up no store, what will ye do in the years of
 lean Kine?

7. Have not you greatly miscarried, as to
 consulting with them? Though one great
 work of your Ministers was, to deal perso-
 nally with your Souls: and God intrusted
 them with the power of binding and loosing,
 (doctrinally at least) and hath promised to
 loose in Heaven, what they loosed on Earth;
 and

Their mis-
 carriages,
 as to con-
 sulting
 with their
 Ministers.

Mat. 16. 19.

Isa. 44. 26.

Laying lit-
tle weight
on their
Judge-
ments.

Not con-
sulting
with them
at all.

Acts 2. 37.

Through
hard-
Hearted-
ness.
Ride.

Prov. 14.
22.Prov. 26.
16.

and to confirm the Word of his Servants, to perform the Counsel of his Messengers; how little weight have you laid upon their judgments?

Have not you more credited the Physicians opinion of your Bodies, and the Lawyers about your Estates, than you have your Ministers concerning your Souls?

How seldom are Ministers consulted with about the business of the Soul and Eternity. Will not they in the Acts rise up to condemn this Generation? They repaired to Christ Ministers, with, Men and Brethren, What shall we do to be saved? But alas! How many have sate 30, 40, 50, Years under a Minister, and never advised with him what to do?

They have been no more moved, than the Rocks were, that Bede Preached to.

Or else, through the Pride of their hearts they have thought to heal themselves: They have been so puff'd up with their own knowledge, that they have not cared to hear what their Ministers could declare unto them. If they be to take a Journey, they will ask the Way of every one they meet; but so unreasonably confident are they of their knowing the Way to Glory, (though there be many Wayes, that do indeed lead down to Hell, yet seem the right Way to Heaven) that they will not so much as ask the Way thither-ward of any Guide. The fool is wiser in his own conceit, than seven men that can render reason.

Or else they have thought as well of their souls as some do of their flesh, that the wound will heal of it self. And hath it not so done? no body knows, how? Can you tell how the troubles and impressions made by the Ministry in your own Souls have worn away? have not Ministers found after the House hath been swept and garnished, that seven worse spirits have entred into the Souls of many convinced, and terrified Professors; and their latter end was worse than their beginning? Many (saith famous Hooker) in a stupid kind of sottish senselesness, wear out the blow, and so waste away to nothing: as many out of sorrow have become like senseless blocks.

Thinking
the wound
will heal
of it self.

How oft hath Satan, like a Cut-purse, drawn thee into solitudes, dissuaded thee from going near thy Minister, that he may rob thee of thy Convictions? and the better to effect this, hath he not perswaded thee to look on the Minister as proud, high, scorn- ing to condescend to hear thy Soul grievan- ces, and complaints, whereas he hath many and many a time with the greatest importu- nity beg'd this trouble of dressing thy sores?

If you have consulted with your Ministers, have not you delayed going to these Soul-Physi- cians? When the wound was newly given, and bleeding, you should have repaired to them; but like Felix, you have dismiss your convictions to some other opportunity. How hath Satan befool'd many? perswading them that there needs not so much ado, that the

Nor con-
sulting
with them
soon
enough.
Act. 24. 25.

Ministers is too legal, that he will drive to despair, that (as *Abab* thought of *Michab*) he will not speak one comfortable word, or that he will blazon the secrets of their souls, and so they shall get a blot by unbofoming themselves.

Their low
and base
ends in
visiting
them.

8. *Have not you had low ends in visiting them?* yea, not only low, but base in going to your Shepherds Tents? Perhaps they are full of History, and you would enrich yourselves with the knowledge of the times of many generations past: perhaps they were merry, (too merry God knows, too full of squibs and jests, the Lord forgive the unseriousness of Ministers) and you have delighted in them, as *Saul* did in *David's* Harp, to drive away sadness and melancholy: or perhaps your Ministers had quick, nimble parts, and you went to them to pick a *Sallet* from their Gardens, to pick some flowers of Oratory, or to please your fancies, or to spend away time; but how seldom to receive virtue from Jesus Christ through these pipes, how seldom to have your rocky hearts broken, and to be cured of your earthly Spirits?

In inviting
them to
their houses.

9. *How oft have you invited them to your houses only to feast them, and to shew outwardly your respect unto them?* but have not put the opportunity to such uses, as *Mary* did Christ's coming to her house? how light, vain, unserious, and jesting have you been in their company? It had been more your wisdom, as well as duty, to have propo-

fed some necessary *Queries* to them with respect to your eternity : you should have drawn out their gifts and graces by proposing such *Questions* as these.

Questions to be ask'd Ministers.

“How Sir shall I know the difference between the *assisting*, and the *informing* and *inhabiting* presence of the Spirit? How shall I discern the Spirit of bondage, from that bondage *Sathan* works in the Children of disobedience? How shall I know the difference betwixt temporary and saving Faith? How twixt legal and evangelical Repentance? How shall I know moral *Virtues* from *Graces*? How shall I know that I am gone beyond the utmost refinements of *Hypocrites*? How shall I know whether the Gospel hath had a saving efficacy on mine heart? How shall I know *Satan's* temptations, from the suggestions of mine own heart? How shall I know when *Satan*, and when the Spirit applies Promises? How shall I discern the motions of the Holy Ghost, from the impulses of *Satan*, when transforming himself into an Angel of light? How shall I know the teachings of the Spirit, from the teachings of Men? How shall I distinguish Fancy from Faith? How shall I know, whether I have only dreamed, that I am full, when all the while I have been empty? How shall I know the Devils black temptations, from mine own corruptions, that I may know whom to charge? How shall I get assurance that my Sins are pardoned? How may I obtain

"victory over the *World*? How may I be
 "delivered from spiritual sloth? What shall I
 "do, that I may retain the influences of O-
 "dinances upon my Spirit? How may I be
 "more useful to all my Relations? How may
 "I bridle my tongue, so as to speak evil of
 "no man? How shall I know what is the
 "work of my Generation? How shall I do the
 "work the works of God? What shall I do to
 "get a trembling heart under the Word and
 "Works of God? How shall I get a soft heart,
 "to mourn for my own and others Sins? How
 "shall I know what is my constitution sin-
 "How shall I know whether my courage be
 "from natural temper, or the grace of God?
 "How shall I know whether my Patience be
 "natural or spiritual? How shall I know,
 "that I shall spend an eternity with God?

Such Questions as these should have been
 seriously debated with your Ministers; but
 wo and alas! When you and your Ministers
 have spent hours together, have not you
 contracted guilt, and made your selves un-
 fit for secret duties, nay perhaps have not
 time for the discharge of them?

Their
 wasting
 Ministers
 time.

10. *How have you devoured much precious*
time in the presence of your Ministers? Both
your own, (which is short enough, therein
 to make your calling and election sure) and
 (which is a much more hainous evil) *your Mi-*
nisters time? Have not you diverted him from
 his great meditations and projects for the
 everlasting good of your Souls? Have not
 you called your Ministers from their knees

and studies to entertain you? and have not you proved *Wells without water*? Have not you by needless vain conferences obstructed your own good, and hindred your Ministers from being useful to your own, and many more Souls.

II. When you have met with your Ministers, *have not you been swift to speak* (when to little purpose) *and slow to hear*, what your Minister, Gods Deputy, would have said unto you? whereas God requireth you *to be swift to hear, and slow to speak*. I have wondred to see the *impudence* of some women herein, who (as if none had tasted of the tree of knowledge, save themselves) have been like bellies full of wind, ready to burst till they had vent, and had no respect to the presence of their Minister, who could not be heard, because of their noise and clamour, though the Apostle hath sealed up their lips, by sending them to ask questions of their *Husbands at home*; yet they must be prating as if they had a Monopoly of all knowledge, and as if their Ministers were to learn of them, rather than they of their Ministers. I am confident it is not the Spirit of God; but the Spirit of Pride, Self-conceit, and vain Glory, which putteth private persons upon these bold intrusions: so that the Minister, who is the mouth of God, is made dumb by their overmuch speaking, who should *learn in silence*. What shall I say? hear not me, but the wisest of men, yea the only wise God in him: *In the multitude of words there want-*

Being swift to speak before, and slow to hear their Ministers.

1 Cor. 14.
35.

1 Tim. 2.
11, 12.

Prov. 10.
19.

eth not sin; but he that refraineth his lips is wise. Believe it, there hath been wanting in most Professors much humility, much seriousness, much reverence of their Ministers: you have not had that fear and awe which became you: few have trembled at their approach to their Ministers, as the people did, when *Samuel* drew near.

1 Sam. 16.
4.

Their niggardlines
to them.

12. *Your Niggardlines to your Ministers is none of the least of your sins; and therefore I shall take liberty to enlarge upon it.* If mens titles to their Cottages, their water-courses, their wayes, their casements be questioned, presently a Lawyer is see'd: we will be at any cost to settle the world surely ours: if our health be in danger, the Physician is sent for: both Lawyers and Physicians houses and rooms are full of Clients and Attendants; but men are contented to clear up their own titles to Heaven and glory, and to heal themselves of their sin sicknesses: a plain argument, that they thought the Ministry but useless, and that they could make a shift to live without Ministers. Thou hast had Prescriptions for thy Souls recovery and health for these many years, and yet perhaps hast not given one farthing to thy Soul-Physicians. If a Physician write a few lines, purses are opened: if a Lawyer plead a quarter of an hour, yea if he plead not at all, but only give his advice, you think he deserves a fee; but the Ministers work is so low in thy esteems, that he might have starved if all were as niggardly as thou hast been. Let this

be considered and lamented. Your Ministers have been under a temptation to withhold the pressing of this duty upon you: for that many lay in wait to discredit them, as if they preached for hire, and sought years rather than you? but let me be your Remembrancer this day. We cannot say of you, as Paul of the Galatians, that you received us as Angels of God, yea as Jesus Christ, and that you would have plucked out your eyes for us: Alas! what did you for us more, than the constraints of the Law compelled you to? And how many wishes had you, that all the Laws for Tithes had been abrogated upon pretence that Ministers should have had a better maintenance by a voluntary contribution?

Giving nothing to them for their maintenance.

But do not we know that the great sticklers for this have been most close-fisted to the Ministers? Have not some of them refused to give one penny to the Ministers, whom they waited on for years together? I wonder how you could in your reading the Scriptures (if you have indeed read them) so long overlook, who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a Vineyard and eateth not the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? Say I these things as a man? or saith not the Law the same also? For it is written in the Law of Moses, thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the Ox, that treadeth out the Corn. Doth God take care for Oxen? Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow

1 Cor. 9.7.

V. 3.

V. 9.

V. 10.

V. 11.

V. 12.

V. 13.

V. 14.

in hope : and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope. If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power : but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the Gospel of Christ. Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things, live of the things of the Temple? And they which wait at the Altar, are partakers with the Altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel. That you may be the better convinced of the neglect of your duty, see the Apostle claims it as his *ἐξουσία*, his Power, his Right, and lawful Authority, to receive maintenance from the *Corinthians* : And indeed Christ hath impowred his Ministers and they may demand it, without any just imputation of covetousness and self-seeking as the Labourer may his hire. The Apostle had power to forbear working, i. e. at his Trade : He implies, that the Ministry would be the saddest employment, because of the laboriousness of it, if Ministers should not live of their Ministry : Besides, Ministers give people gold for brass : Again, They who ministered about the holy things, lived of the things of the Temple, yea and plentifully too; for they had the *Tenth*, and yet were scarce the *Sixtieth* part of the People for the number of the People, without the *Levites*, amounted to a thousand thousand

and three hundred thousands : and the Levites, numbred from the Infant to the old man, were found but two and twenty thousands. But alas ! Though the Apostle be so peremptory here and else-where, *Let him that is taught in the Word, communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things :* And the Wise-man, *Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thy increase ;* Yet I may renew an old complaint: Many have dealt by their Ministers, as Carriers do by their Horses, they lay heavy burdens upon them, and then hang Bells about their necks : hard work, and good words they shall have ; but easie commons, and slight wages : as if they were of the Camelion-kind, and could live by the air.

Gal. 6.6.

Prov. 3.9.

But if you have parted with any thing to the Minister, hath it not been as *Almes*, not as *Dues*, not as *Right* ? Have not you excused your selves from giving what was due from you, with, *The Minister needs it not, he hath a fair Estate, or at least a competency ?* Yea, but what saith the Apostle ? *Have ye not reaped our spiritual things ? and should not we your carnals ? Have ye not been instructed ? Why then did ye not communicate to your Ministers in all good things ?* Hath not the Lord expressly alienated a proportion of Goods for the Ministers labour ? How dare you live in the Sin of *Sacriledge* ? Is it not *Sacriledge* for you to detain from God what is due to him ? *You are in the snare ; for you have devoured that which is holy.* Suppose a man should

Or else giving only in charity, not in justice : as an almes, not as due.

Prov. 20.
25.

should work for thee all the day long, would it be an excuse for the detaining his day from him, to say, The man hath a competency, yea he is rich, he is richer than I, my Children want it more than he doth, he hath little or no charge? O! saith the Lord, *The Labourer is worthy of his hire.* Wouldst thou not say so in that mans case? O! Look up to the Light of Nature, or throw up the Professon. It is no less than a wonder to see how little honesty there is among men, yea among Professours. To defraud a Minister is hardly counted a sin. The rise of this is the great contempt of the Ministry: A Sin that God is now reckoning with you for. *The Lord God of your Fathers sent to you by his Messengers, rising up betimes and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place; but you mocked his Messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his Prophets: May it not be added? Untill the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy. For this Sin, God brought upon the Israelites the King of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword, in the house of their Sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age, he gave them all into his hand. Have not you cause to fear, lest you shall also be so given into the hands of worse Babylonians? You can judge what is a Ministers competency; but when have ye a competency? You can add field to field, house to house, hundreds*

2 Chron.
36. 16,
16, 17.

hundreds, and yet the *Horse-leech* cries
Give, Give : Yet do not you judge a small
 stipend, that will hardly keep body and soul
 together, a competency for a Minister?
 What is that great service you do for God
 above the Minister, that you should think it
 reasonable, to leave hundreds, yea thou-
 sands to your Children, and that the Mini-
 ster should be kept so short, that he cannot
 leave them a groat? What shall I say to you?
 Let me borrow the words of God by the
 Prophet: *Will a man rob God? Yet ye have* Mal. 3. 8;
robbed me: But ye say, wherein have we rob- 9, 10.
bed thee? In Tythes and Offerings. Ye are
curst with a curse: for ye have robbed me,
even this whole Nation. Bring ye all the
Tythes into the Store-house, that there may be
meet in mine house, and prove me now here-
with, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open
you the windows of Heaven, and pour you out a
blessing, that there shall not be room enough to
receive it.

O! Do not any longer detain what is due
 to your former Ministers: make restitution
 of unjust gain, as ever you hope to be saved.
 It is not enough to say, Lord, forgive me,
 I thought it not my duty; but thou must
 reckon how many years thou hast reaped Spi-
 rituals, and pay what thou owest, or *Judas*
 will condemn thee, for he thought it unsafe
 to keep what was unjustly got. Remember
Zachew, he thought it not enough to give
 over his oppression, but, when converted,
 he made conscience of making restitution.

Let

Restitution
 to be made
 by such, as
 have not
 given what
 was due
 from them
 to their
 Ministers.

1 Tim. 5.
17, 18.

Let the Elders that rule well, be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the Word and Doctrine: For the Scripture saith, thou shalt not muzzle the Ox, that treadeth out the Corn; and the Labourer is worthy of his reward. Here you see double honour, honour of reverence, and honour of maintenance, was due unto your Ministers. Here is an allusion to the right of the first-born, who were to have a double portion. Their maintenance was due from you; neither should their maintenance have been ordinary mercenary wages, but such as is given by way of honour, as well as by way of reward. Have not you lived in the contempt

1 Cor. 9.
14.

of an Ordinance of God? The Lord hath ordained, &c. as before. Do not any longer delude your Consciences, by crying against Tythes, as Antichristian, as Jewish. Did not Abraham, before the Jewish Laws, pay Tythes to Melchisedech? And are there not from thence arguments drawn that you cannot answer? Why do ye not fear, lest through the prevalency of Self, you should be too base, covetous and partial in your own matters? O! Give to God, what is Gods: Deny not your Ministers their dues. You owe vast summs to them, which if you detain in this day of their wants, God will call you to a speedy account for the grinding of the faces of these poor, yea he will make you vomit up such sweet morsels, with all the rest of your substance, if not with your blood. Behold the hire of the Labourers,

Jam. 5. 4.

which

which have reaped down your Fields; which is
 if you kept back by fraud, cryeth : and the
 ries of them, which have reaped, are entred
 into the ears of the Lord of Sabbath. Lydia
 even enforced the Apostles to accept of her
 gift. The Macedonians beseeched Paul with
 much entreaty, to accept of their bounty.
 If thou wert converted by one of them, thou
 didst owe to him no less than thy self : What
 thou art and hast, should not have been
 counted too dear for him, who was Gods
 Instrument, to pull thee as a brand out of
 the fire, even when thou wast half burnt.
 Say at length with David, *I will not serve my
 God with that which cost me nothing.* I shall
 conclude this head with the saying of a Re-
 verend man, " It is a plain argument of a
 " base esteem of God, of Grace, of the
 " Kingdome of Heaven, that a Servant,
 " a Factor, should have twenty times the
 " allowance of Heavens Factor for your
 " Souls : You are not come up to the ho-
 " nesty of the Pharisee, He gave Tythes of all
 " that he possessed, even of the smallest things,
 " of Mint, and Annis, and Cummin : And
 " doth not Christ say, *These things ye ought
 " to have done ?* What were your Ministers
 " more unworthy than the Priests of that
 " Age ?

Mat. 23. 23.

Luk. 11. 42.

13. If you have not been niggardly to-
 ward your Ministers whilest alive with you,
 have not you been niggardly towards their
 Wives and Children after their deaths ? Veri-
 ly not minding the Widows and Children of
 Ministers.

Their re-
 gardlesness
 of the Wid-
 dows and
 Children of
 their dead
 Ministers.

deceased Ministers is a sin that God will remember in the day of accounts. *David* required after the seed of *Jonathan*: he evidenced his true love to the Father in remembering the posterity. O ! when shall we be without dissimulation ?

Their
grieving
their Mi-
nisters.

14. *Have not you been a very great trouble to their Souls ?* Your Ministers were so affectionately desirous of you, that they were willing to have imparted to you, not the Gospel only ; but also their own Souls ; because ye were dear unto them : And is it your kindness to your Friends ? to bring even their hearts, who were glad to spend and be spent for you ? How proudly have you carried it toward them ? God threatened the *Israelites* that the *Canaanites* should prick in their eyes, and thorns in their sides. Surely it better became *Canaanites* to be thorns to the *Israelites*, than for you to be thorns to your Ministers. How oft have you grieved them to see your stoutness and rebellion against all their Counsels ! May your Ministers say as *David*, *I beheld Transgressors, and was grieved : because they kept not thy Word ?* May they not say, We have seen your lukewarmness, your sloth, your earthliness, &c. and our Souls were troubled ? You should have been like the *Thessalonians*, the crown of our rejoicing ; but you have been crowns of thorns, which have pierced not our heads, but hearts : You should have refreshed our Bowels, been our Cordials, and sweet refreshives, after

Psal. 119.
158.

1 Thes. 5.
19.

will our wearisome labours ; but have not you
 David dealt unkindly with us ? and the more we
 : he have loved you, have not we had the less
 n reme love from you ? Have not you been more
 hall lo merciful to your Horses and Dogs, than to
 your Ministers ? You have baited, and been
 kind to those creatures ; but God knows how
 after all our toyle, our rising up early, and
 sitting up late, our spending our strength, our
 lungs, our spirits, yea and our estates among
 you, you have requited us evil for good, even
 to the spoiling of our Souls. *Ye stiffe-necked* Acts 7.
 and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do al- 51, 52.
 ways resist the Holy-Ghost : as your Fathers
 did, so do ye. Which of the Prophets have not
 your Fathers persecuted ? &c. Have not you
 in your hypocrisie made outcries against
 others for silencing your Ministers ? for taking
 away the bread out of yours and your Chil-
 drems mouths ? and for removing them from
 their stations and dwellings ? But may not I
 profess in the name of all my Fellow-Suffer-
 ers, that your misimprovements, your in-
 constancies, your pride, and earthliens, have
 been, and are our chiefest burdens ? a greater
 pressure to us, than any burdens, that lye up-
 on our names, bodies, or estates ? I cannot
 but think of a passage of holy Mr. *Shepherd*,
 The Jews (saith he) did long for Christ, and
 when he came, they Crucified him : and you
 would have Ministers, and you had them, and
 though you did not (immediately) cast them
 out of their places ; yet you so wearied their
 Spirits, and grieved the Spirit in them, that
 you

you made them glad to bury themselves, and leave their places ; you had Prophets and their tears and their sorrows too, yea and their blood too, and O ! what a light matter was it unto you to break their very hearts :

Heb. 13.

17.

How little did you obey them that ruled over you, and submitted your selves, that they might give their accounts with joy, and not with grief ! How little did you believe, that that is unprofitable for you ? Have not you made nothing

Isa. 49. 45.

of it, for your Ministers to lose their labour, to put them upon crying out, *I have laboured in vain ?* Yea how have you grieved their very Souls with reproaches ? Some who have pretended affection to them, yet have had their reproachful Names of Priest, Parson, Vicar, &c. Though God hath put a Crown of honour upon them, by making them his Ambassadors ; yet how have some impudent Professours blasted them with their stinking breath, and profane scoffs ? Ambassadors are inviolable by the Laws of Nations. The Lord (saith one) hath set a better mark on them, than Cain had, and given them a better passport : *touch not mine anointed, and do my Prophets no harm :* yet you have made a light matter of vexing their very Souls. When you could have nothing else against your Minister, have not you been censuring him for his manner of speaking ? His Letters (say they) are weighty and powerful, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible.

2 Cor. 10.

10.

Lastly, Have not your Ministers been so troublesome to you in your sins, in your formality, worldliness, lukewarmness, &c. that you were even weary of them? Have not you been as weary of them, as the Children of Israel of Angels food? as weary as weak stomachs are of feeding on one dish? Your Ministers urged flesh-displeasing and self-denying duties: they would not suffer you to sin quietly; and were not you therefore burthened with them? they would not stand and comply with your carnal ends and sinful interests; and did not your hearts therefore cry out away with them? Have not you been like the Gadarenes, more willing to part with your Ministers, than with your swinish lusts? Because you did not like to retain God in your knowledge, 'tis no wonder if God give up many of you to a reprobate mind. Hath not the Gospel been too costly, too chargeable to some of you? and too irksome, requiring too much pains taking, to others of you? O! when you Remember your crying iniquities, for which God is chiefly contending with you, forget not this dreadful sin of being weary of Gods Ambassadors, of being weary of speaking with God, and of hearing God speak unto your Souls.



CHAP. XXXIII.

*Their miscarriages with reference to the
Ministers of Christ, since their removal.*

Professors
miscarri-
ages to-
ward their
Ministers
since their
removal.
Not find-
ing the
want of
them.
Not
esteeming
the loss
great
enough.

1. **H**ow many of you do not find them want-
ing? This will be evident by the fol-
lowing **Q**ueries.

*Have you indeed accounted that none in the
world want help like your selves upon this very
account? Do you look upon your selves as
sitting in darkness, yea in the region and shad-
ow of death? under a worse Plague than the
Egyptian-darkness? that was a darkness,
wherein men lived; but do you look on this
as a darkness of death? Do you account a
Throne without the Gospel but the Devils
Dungeon? Wealth without the Gospel, fuel
for Hell? Advancement without the Gospel,
but a going high, to have the greater fall?
Do you look upon your selves as under a
worse famine than that of bread? Cannot you
your selves make up this great loss? cannot you
set other things in the breach?*

Going
about to
make it up,
by good
books.

Do not some of you set good books in the
room of your Ministers? I confess (saith a
Reverend Man) Reading hath its use; but the
voice hath a secret force upon the Soul, it hath
a Ministerial efficacy, by which the Authority

and Sovereign efficacy of the Spirit is conveyed. I pray God the fruitfulness of the Press may not beget a disesteem and contempt of the great Ordinance of the Minister already: you have been told already that *Lucifer* had rather his books should be burnt, than the Scriptures suffer a dishonour and neglect by perusing his papers.

Do not some of you set your own parts and gifts in their room? Do not some of you think that you have so profited by their Ministry, that you have no further need to attend upon any Ministers of Christ? May not such doubt whether their experience of the power and efficacy of the Ministry hath been true, seeing true experience thereof sweeteneth the Ministry unto Souls, raiseth up their esteems of it, and engageth them to a further and more chearful attendance upon it. A true taste will sharpen the Souls appetite: the true Christian gets a Stomach by eating, as the new born babe by sucking. As new born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if so be that ye have found that the Lord is gracious.

Their own parts and gifts.

1 Pet. 2.
2, 3.

Do not some of you go about to make up your selves by attending on Christs companions in the sense of *Solomon*? by going to Wells without water? by sucking empty breasts, whence you can draw nothing, but wind or blood? what is this but seeking the living among the dead? expecting gracious showers from Clouds without rain? making up the want of bread with stones, if not payson? O!

And Christs companions.
Cant. 1. 7.

why do not you say, Tell me, O thou whom my Soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy Flocks to rest at Noon? for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?

Not mourning enough for the want of them.

What sighs, sorrows, tears, &c. hath the removal of your Ministers cost you? Cannot you rub it out very quietly? If you lose your Jewels, Estates, Names, Friends, Children, &c. we can read the sorrows of your hearts in your countenances: you are almost angry with God when a good is smitten. O! what sinkings of heart are there among Professors? what cares? fears? griefs? not only to the sadning of their hearts, but altering of their countenances, when the world vanisheth? And yet no aching hearts, no dejected countenances for the glory's departing, for Gods shutting up house and departure? I am confident it hath not broke one nights rest to many, who yet will think themselves wronged, if they be not placed in the highest form of Profession.

Not Fasting under this Judgment.

What time hast thou set apart to humble thy Soul for all thy abuses of the Gospel and Ministry thereof? If a Child be sick, time must be set apart to humble thee before God: this is your duty; but the other should not have been neglected. Thou mayest subsist better without Children, than without these Spiritual Fathers: a Gospel Ministry is a greater Jewel, than many Sons and Daughters. Thy having sinned away the food of thy Soul should have put thee in Sackcloth, and upon Fasting

Fasting with mourning long ago. *All Israel lamented after the Ark*; But are not you as merry and sensual at your tables as ever?

Yea are not you secretly glad at the removal of your Ministers? Ministers and Ministry (saith *Shepherd*) are bills of charges to a Congregation, and too costly Inhabitants among them.

2. Have you justified God in the removal of them? God as a wise and provident Master gave you glorious lights to do his work by; but you have plaid away your time: is it any wonder that he hath put out your Tapers and Candles? Have you confest the righteousness of God herein, that he will not be at cost to find you Candle light to play by? Hath this been thy hearts acknowledgement, "God gave me these lights, that I might work for him by them; and because I did not, but wrought the works of darkness; therefore he hath most justly left me in darkness, and in the shadows of death: because I received not the truth in the love thereof: I took it into mine head, but not into mine heart; God may justly send me strong delusions, that I should believe a lie." It is the observation of *Pareus* upon many of the Jews being seduced, that it was just with God, that they should believe impostors; because they would not give credit to Jesus Christ. O! God may make short work with us in his Judiciary proceedings. When God hath departed upon repulse, he hath left a dismal curse be-

Not justifying God in their removal.

2 Thess. 2. 10, 11.

Vide Pareus in Act. 5. 36.

"hind him : I say unto you that none of these
 "men, which were bidden shall taste of my Sup-
 "per : If the meat be on the table ; yet it is
 "just with God that I shall never taste of it :
 "for I have controlled the Spirit again and
 "again : twenty, thirty, forty years have I
 "vexed the good Spirit of the Lord, and
 "therefore he may swear in his wrath that I
 "shall never enter into his rest : If some
 "shall never taste that have neglected one
 "Call, wo is me, who have neglected
 "thousands. Take words and say ; because
 "I have not obeyed the voice of thy Ser-
 "vants, it is righteous that I perish by the
 "Sword, and dye without knowledge.

Job 36.12.

Not bless-
 ing God
 for former
 opportuni-
 ties.

3. *How little have you blest, and do you
 bless God, that once you did enjoy a Gospel Mini-
 stry ? and such a Gospel Ministry ? How sel-
 dom are such words as these, Blessed be thou,
 and blessed be their Counsels, and blessed be the
 Lord, that sent them out to meet me in for-
 mer dayes, and for so many dayes, months, and
 years together, found in your mouths ? It is
 a sign that your disesteems of the Gospel and
 Ministry do still abide, whilst you cannot
 find in your hearts to thank God for enjoy-
 ing so choice a blessing for so many years to-
 gether.*

Not crying
 for their
 return.

4. *What cries have you sent up to Heaven
 for the return of your Ministers ? Dare you
 thus imprecate, Let my tongue cleave to the
 roof of my mouth, if I forget to pray for
 Zions welfare in this particular ? Had the
 Ministry of the Gospel been counted a glori-*

our blessing, you would have sent strong eyes to Heaven, for the return of it: Had you believed, that they came to treat with your Souls, about your peace with God, and that God hath appointed this as the great means to bring your Souls to himself, you would not have parted with your Ministers so easily, being as little moved, as at the withering, and throwing to the dunghill, of a formerly flourishing Nose-gay of Flowers, and you would have wrestled with the Lord, for the return of these glorious Lights of Heaven. How can you chuse but fear, the Lord hath no more Souls to convert in that place, from which the Gospel is removed? Jesus Christ prayed, that the Gospel might be sent to the *Gentiles*: *In an acceptable time have I heard thee.* O! How should you have prayed for the fruit of Christ's prayer? Have you back'd prayer with prayer? Have you doubled your Prayers for the return of your *Fathers*? Have they not begotten you? *Should they not be unto you as Fathers*? Will not Idolatrous Micah else condemn you?

Isa. 49 8.
compared
with 2 Cor.
6. 2.

Judg. 9 17.

5. *How little do you set your selves in a posture for the return of the Gospel and the Ministers of it?* Untill you have humbled your Souls as low as the dust for your unprofitableness, pride, sensuality, earthliness, dis-esteems, and neglects of the Gospel, for your abuse of the talents of Gold, that you hid or wasted, can you imagine that God will intrust you with more talents? A-

Not pre-
paring for
such a
mercy.

las I few put themselves in a readines : few
prepare to meet God, as formerly they have
met him in the solemn Assemblies. Verily,
*Rel. 5. 13. God is gone and returned unto his place, till you
acknowledge your offences (your Gospel-sins)
and seek his face. But if ye seek him not early,
how can ye hope for the bringing back the
Captivity? that the glory and strength will
return?*

Being nig-
gardly
even now
toward
them.

6. *How little do ye now lay out for the re-
freshing and feeding of your poor Ministers,
now that their necessities are so growing?
you cannot now excuse your niggardliness
with this, they have a competency : Alas!
most of them, and their many little ones are
in great straights and exigencies, and what
kill straightned in your bowels? Is not the
Proverb made good, Out of sight out of mind?
If all were as unmerciful as some of you,
they and their Children would swoon away
in desolate Wildernesses. Remember He-
gar and the Child : Did God pity that Egy-
tian? and have you no pity on your poor
Ministers? Are not you so far from the Ma-
cedonian bounty, of giving above your pow-
er, that you will not afford them your su-
perfluities? Who is there that redeems from
his table, from his belly, from his cloaths,
to cover these naked shoulders, and to fill
these empty bellies? Doth not Baruck's sin
run upon you, you trade for your selves
seek great things for your selves, and send
away your spiritual Fathers, with, I pray
God bless you, &c. be ye clothed,*

but do not give according to their necessities,
and your abilities. O! *How dwelleth the love* James 2.
of God in you? Boast what you will of your 15, 16, 17.
Profession and Faith, your *Faith without Works*
is but dead.



CHAP. XXXIV.

Want of Love among Professors.

AS touching brotherly love (saith the Apo- A com-
stle Paul to the Thessalonians) you need plaint of
not that I write unto you; for ye your selves are the want
taught of God to love one another, and indeed of love
you do it: But may not I say to English Pro- among
fessors, As touching brotherly love, you need Christians.
that I write unto you, for you are not taught of 1 Theff. 4:
God? "The fire of brotherly love (saith 10.
"one) is almost ready to go out, scarce
"any spark of it yet remaining among us; but
"instead of the fire of love, the wild-fire of
"passion rageth vehemently, and is predo-
"minant. Many live as if they had been
"born on the Mountains of Bether, the
"Mountains of Division; and as if they had
"been baptized in the Waters of Meribah,
"the Waters of Strife. Ob! that my head
were waters, and mine eyes fountains of tears,
to weep day and night for the want of love in
the

the Christians of this generation towards one another. How common hath it been, to confine our love to our own party? We have not loved all the Saints. How few Bueers are there? How few love all in quibus aliqui Christi vident, in whom they see any thing of Christ? Many even hate those that differ from them, though but in Circumstantialia: Others, though they are ashamed to profess their hatred upon such an account, yet cover their hatred by deceit, till their wickedness can be hid no longer, but shewed before the whole Congregation. The Devil began his Legerdemain this way, by covering his Enmity with pretence of Friendship. What saith the Apostle? *Let love be without dissimulation*: But alas! *With a double heart* how do Professors speak? How few have purified their Souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the Brethren? Most love in word and in tongue only, but not in deed and in truth. Many, like your Feather-caps bumble Servant, pretend love; but it never appears above-board: it is Dear Friend, Good Soul; but their hearts are not with you. In order to the convincing of us of our guiltiness herein, O that our Consciences may be suffered to give in full answers to the following Queries!

Evidenced
in calling
for Fire
from
Heaven
against
those of
different
persuasi-
ons.

1. How have we called for Fire from Heaven, (like the two Disciples) when we have thought our selves dishonoured, in that others have not given such a reception to our ways and practices in Religion, as we expected? Have

not

Magistrates been infligated against godly persons, if of a different perswasion from our selves? Have not we wished others, that divided from us in some Circumstances of Worship, even banished? Have we not cryed out, the Land is not able to bear them? Have not we been glad, when such were put out of all Offices and Places of Profit? And have not some thought it good service to God, if they had been kill'd? Whilst some under colour of mercy and tenderness, cryed for a general Toleration, even of blasphemy: Others ran into the other extream, and would endure nothing, that they deemed an Error. Even to this day, if men scruple at the lawfulness of some Ceremonies and Gestures in the Service of God, they are thought worthy, not only to be cast out of the Church; but to be delivered over to the Secular Magistrate, for Imprisonment, and Confiscation of Goods at least: So much is *Pauls* meekness forgotten and un-imitated, who (though zealous against the Faith-destroying Errors of *Hymeneus* and *Philetus*, yet) would have much forbearance for others, when doubting of the use of Meats, and the *Jewish* Ceremonies. "I read indeed in *Pagan* Writers (saith one) that Christians were as cruel as Bears and Tygers against one another, &c. But I had hoped that this accusation had come from the malice of *Pagan* Writers; Little did I think to have seen it so far verified, &c. Lord, What Devils are we Unsanctified, when

"there

Baxters
Sa'nts Rest.
 Edit. 8.
 part. 1.
 chap. 7.
 p. 111.

Un-Saint-
ing of
them up-
on that
account.
Hildersham
on Psal. 51.
p. 691.

“there is yet such a Nature remaining in the
“Sanctified? Such a Nature hath God in
“these dayes suffered to discover it self,
“even in the Godly, that, if he did not gra-
“ciously and powerfully restrain, they
“would shed the blood of one another, and
“no thanks to us, that it is not done.

2. To facilitate the destroying of such
without remorse, *Have not we blotted out the*
reputation of their holiness, and represented
Saints even as Devils? “It is utterly a fault
“among you, (said one of our *English Wor-*
“thies formerly) that the difference in
“judgement and practice about the Cere-
“monies of our Church, hath caused such
“strangeness, and alienation of mind and
“affection, between such as do truly fear
“God, both Ministers and People; We are
“so far from recieving, esteeming, loving
“and maintaining society one with another,
“notwithstanding this difference of judge-
“ment about these things, that we are apt to
“despise and judge one another for it, and
“doubt whether there be any truth of grace
“in them, that differ from us in these things.
“Surely, (saith the one side) the indiffe-
“ency and lawfulness of these things, is now
“so clearly manifested, as these men must
“needs be wilfully blind, that do not see it:
“Nay, certainly they cannot chuse but see
“it well enough, and were it not for a car-
“nal respect to their credit with the people,
“among whom they have gotten a great
“Name and Applause, by standing out so
“long

long, they would doubtless conform them-
 selves. And surely (*saieth the other side*)
 the utter unlawfulness of these Ceremo-
 nies is now so clearly revealed, that these
 men must needs be wilfully blind, that
 see it not. Nay, they do see it well
 enough, and were it not for a carnal re-
 spect they have unto their worldly peace,
 and estate, they would never use them;
 certainly they sin against their Conscience
 in observing of them: And what truth of
 grace can there be in them, that are wil-
 fully blind? and for carnal respects do
 thus sin against their own Conscience?
 Thus do both sides grossly and dangerously
 err, and sin against their Brethren: And *1 Cor. 3.*
when ye sin so against the Brethren, ye sin ^{12.}
against Christ. For the experience of all
 times, and of this present age, proveth
 evidently, that there be of both sides, that
 fear God unfeignedly, and in the whole
 tenour and course of whose conversation,
 the life and power of true godliness doth
 manifestly appear. And if thou do not see
 this (whoever thou art, that art most
 bitter and violent of either side) then art
 thou certainly thy self most wilfully blind.
 And I do assure thee (in the Name of the
 Lord, and by good warrant out of his
 Word) that if thou canst not unfeignedly
 love every one that truly feareth the Lord
 (whether he *conform*, or not *conform*)
 If thou canst not bewail and strive against
 these hard-conceits thou hast been wont to
 enter-

"entertain against such, thou canst have
"comfort at all in thine own estate before
God.

Thus far he that was in his time Englands
best Preacher. And is the matter any way
amended now? O! How have Professors
spoken all manner of evil against those that
have differed from them in circumstances.
Have not they publickly railed one at another
ther? What filthy Names have they given
one another? Schismatics, Rebels, Divi-
ders, Peace-breakers, enemies to the State
&c. even as bad as the Heathens gave the
Christians? Have not we been so eager
against such, that all the peoples time has
been swallowed up in invectives of one par-
ty against another? Have not we been cool-
ed and blunted, and lost our zeal in matters
of greatest moment, by letting out our
zeal against the supposed errors of our Bre-
thren?

Backbiting
them.

Lev. 19. 16.

Deut. 27.

24.

Rom. 1.

29, 30.

Prov. 10.

12.

3. If we have not been guilty of Un-fair-
ing them; yet how little have we heeded the
commands of God against back-biting? Thou
shalt not go up and down, as a Tale-bearer
among the people. Cursed be he that smiteth his
Neighbour secretly. When the Apostle would
set forth the great abominations of the Gre-
tles, he saith, they were whisperers and
back-biters. Were there love, it would cure
all sins. Whom we love, we are wont to
commend and praise; but instead of this, how
do we speak against those that differ from
us, behind their backs, though we speak for

have their faces? O abominable Hypocrisie!
 we have not some commended an action to the
 face of the man, and presently in another
 place and company censured the same? whom
 we love we would have others to love; but
 by back-biting we seek to draw off others al-
 so from their duty. Herein, O! how do
 we serve the Devil, who is the great media-
 tor of differences? I have oft thought upon
 the Artificial kind of Back-biting in *Bernard's*
 time: "When they slander, they will fetch
 deep sighs as if they were much greived,
 that others should be so and so guilty, yea
 they will say, I am exceedingly sorry for
 such an one, that he should commit so hai-
 nous a crime: when perhaps it was all the
 while but a base lying report. Besides
 they will charge the Tale-bearer with the
 greatest secrecie, when they will take li-
 berty to asperse as far as they have oppor-
 tunity, they tell the fault only to a Friend,
 that will tell no body, but Folks, of it.
 But why may not he have forfeited the
 gift of keeping Counsel, as well as thy self?
 Why shouldst thou think that the *Hearer*
 will conceal, when thou the *Teller* canst
 not? And if thou hast a mind the Brothers
 infirmities should be hid, why dost not
 thou hide them? Or why dost thou disclose
 them to one; whom thou suspectest to be
 no way friendly to the infamed person? If
 a man of a different perswasion live so
 humbly, that we are forced to commend
 them, yet we will surely bring in one Ca-
 lumny

*Videas
 premiti al-
 ta suspiria,
 Doleo vehe-
 menter de eo
 grande dan-
 num, &c.
 Bern. in
 Cant. Serm.
 24.*

"lunny or other, that shall blot the person
 "and weaken all our encomiums of him
 "when we have been forced to speak of
 "others good actions, how commonly do we
 "lay in a But, something or other, to abate
 "the esteem, that is due; *it were well done,*
 "*the ends were right, if from good principles*
 "*if not done in hypocrisie, &c.* and by these
 "insinuations we restrain others from loving
 "proportionably to the merit of the per-
 "son. This is *Doeg-like*: he told the truth
 "but he insinuated as if *David* had an evil in-
 "tention, and the Priests were in the Con-
 "federacy. Or we add, *we should like him*
 "*well, if he were not thus and thus; but he*
 "*is a leaper, &c. proud, covetous, &c.* At
 feasts, if not in more solemn meetings, what
 liberty have we taken to speak against our
 Brethren? When *Dionysius* feared *Plato*
 would revile him in the Academy among his
 Companions: *God forbid (said Plato) that*
there should be such scarcity of matter to talk of
in the Academy, that they should talk of thee.
 Believe it, we had spent our time better to
 warm one anothers hearts with the love of
 Christ, than to exasperate and inflame the
 Spirits of each other against our Brethren.
 What saith *Plutarch*, another Heathen? *You*
have matter enough at home, and within, to busy
your selves about.

Harkning
 to back-
 biters.

4. How easily have we entertained a report,
 and credited it against Brethren of different
 persuasions? The love of Mothers makes them
 incredulous as to any charges laid against their

their Children; but how seldom have we driven away a back-biting tongue with an angry countenance? how have we been Tale-bearers; how have we encouraged the Back-biter to open his pack? how have we received all the defamations he would bring us? how have we credited reports upon hearsay, without any examination? how apt are we to censure and judge before he, *which is the Accused, have the Accuser face to face.* This was the Romans Law: I wish it were the Christians. Some of you learnt long ago, that it is injustice to determine without bearing both parties. Have we loved our Neighbours Name and Credit, as our own? May we not conclude that God will measure to us, as we have to our Brethren? *Is it our wisdom to believe every word?* Would not David cut off those whom we embrace? We pretend we are not the first reporters; but are not we glad the report is spread beyond recall? are not we glad that others good names are stoln away? and do not we harbour the stolngoods? When others set our Neighbours Names on Fire, do not we look on, and gladly warm our selves by it, and cry *Aha! So would we have it?* But when do we go to the defamed Neighbour to hear what Apologie he can make for himself? were we not willing he should fall in our esteems, we would have the Accuser and Accused face to face.

5. How have we amplified and aggravated the offences of differing parties beyond their due proportion.

*Qui statuit
aliquid par-
te inaudita
altera;
Æquum li-
cet statuerit,
haud æ-
quum fuerit.*
Sen. Trag.
Prov. 14.
15.
Psal. 109.
5.

proportion? For fifty have not we set down an hundred? Have not we represented that as done *against light*, which was done *ignorantly*? and that done with *deliberation*, which was done *rashly*? We have not made a difference between *raigning sins*, and *humane frailties*: between *sins repented of*, and *not repented of*. How have we been guilty in drawing consequences from our Adversaries Assertions, and fastning such opinions on them, as we knew their Souls abhorred? and yet hardly hath one of a thousand retracted these unjust charges, or humbled himself for this great iniquity before God, or Man.

Not silencing
Names of
distinction.

6. *Have we silenced our characterising Names even to this very day?* These have been the Devils bellows, which he hath put and kept to our mouths, to blow up our differences to the greater flame: These one calls, *the trumpets of discord*, and a main obstacle to peace.

Not endeavouring
peace as
we ought.

7. *Did we begin to stop breaches betimes?* did not we suffer our wounds to be kept open too long? and how few yet are there that endeavour to compose the jars and differences that are among us? When there were bickerings concerning Moses, the Law, Circumcision, and Sacrifices; how doth Paul beseech Enodias and Syntiche? How few like one of the Fathers, who was so much affected with the divisions of Christians, that he profest himself ready to let out his own blood to cement them together? I hear many outcries against division; and now it is

every mans mouth, it is time to agree; But ask them; what they mean by *agreement*? and you'l find *Conformity* is intended; they would have you to stoop to them, even against Conscience: they will not abate an inch of what they have pretended, and professed as their principle? Few entreat for peace, and those few that do indeed endeavour to hinder the strife of Brethren, fare no better than *Moses*: He is thought to carry on a design for a party that sues for peace, and desires brotherly and amicable Conferences. Many cry for peace, and commend it; but they will not be at cost for it. The cursed principle is still harboured, that it is a dishonourable thing to yield first; but that others must begin to stoop to us: Whereas it is Gods honour, that he stooped to us first. We are loath to sue for peace, and to beg reconciliation with those, that have been more in the offence than we. I find little condescending to remove mistakes and prejudices. If we have once offered terms of peace and reconciliation, we satisfie ourselves therein; but have not pursued and followed after peace: we have not used means upon means: This is a clear evidence of our too much indulging our discords and animosities. When there is a dislocation of one Member of the Natural Body, if one Bone-setter sets it not right, we try another: and leave no means unessayed, till all be brought into Order again. Sure our hearts are not overcome with the love of peace: I

with we could say as Luther once in an Epistle to the Pastors of Straesburgh, I pray you be perswaded, that I shall alwayes be as desirous to embrace concord, as I am desirous to have the Lord Jesus propitious to me.

Our differences making us to mislike good enterprises, and discommend what we have approved, and that in the whole party.

Not confessing their faults one to another; but upbraiding one another as the causes of all our miseries.

8. Have not our differences come to the height, that we have condemned those actions of Dissenting Brethren, which before they dissented from us we approved and commended? Demetrius of Alexandria liked Origen's making himself an Eunuch, till they fell out, and then he wrote against it. Yea, have not we discommended some very good enterprises, merely because they had an hand in them? Thus some confessed that they had liked many of Luthers Reformatiions, but that so contemptible a Monk should have the honour of beginning them. When men are highly inflamed for some one thing, they will dislike all the party doth, whilst they are in that passion. Besides have not we been apt to quarrel with, and mislike whatsoever is done by, a whole society, if we be fallen out with one of that society? Hath not a whole family sometimes suffered, because we have been angry with one of that Family?

9. How few are there that mutually confess their faults each to other? though doubtless both sides have had their failings in such a time of darkness and temptation? But instead of this are there not mutual upbraidings? if not to the face of each other, yet (which is more criminal) behind each others backs. Do they not impute the cause of all the

series felt and feared to such and such disorders of such parties? Who is so ingenious as to confess, and take shame for his own, and his parties miscarriages?

10. *How strong are our memories (even to this day) to retain all bitter, and unchristian passages of one party toward another? And if some have buried them: yet are there not some of the Devils agents, that are raking them out of the dust, to exasperate Spirits afresh, and so to widen our difference?*

Not forgetting unkind passages.

11. *How have we suffered Sin to rest upon others? and why? They are not of our Church. Thou shouldst not deal with a Turk, as thou hast dealt with Christians: nor with a Beast, going astray, as thou hast with thy Brothers Soul. O! Into what times are we fallen? That the Jews were kinder to Beasts, than we are to one another: if any go astray, we help them not to return into the right way: if they perish, let them perish, for any care we take to reclaim them: if non-members, they must not be regarded. Thou shouldst not hate thy Brother in thy heart, but reprove him: and not foolishly confine and narrow Brotherhood to thy particular Congregation, and suffer others to be damned, when thou by a faithful reproof mightst have saved them. Whilst you care so little whether God be honoured, or dishonoured by others, your zeal against Sin in your own bosoms, or in your Society, may justly be called in question, whose Image doth it bear? Instead of reproving a Christian, that differs from us, ac-*

Suffering Sin to rest on them.

cording to the rule of Christ, for any miscarriage, that we are privy to, have not we let him run on, and then told on the house-top, what was done in secret? We hide their imperfections, whom we love, and faithfully, but secretly, admonish them; but have not some pretended an high Friendship to others, on purpose to espy their liberty, that they may afterwards have an occasion to reproach them, and all their party on their account? *He that seeth his Brothers face saved, and tells him not of it, hath a mind that others should see his spots as well as himself.* And is this love to thy Friends? O! How have we uncovered that, which ingenuous Humanity should have concealed? Can you talk of your Friends, that are most dear to you?

Restraining
Prayer for
them.

John 5.
16.

Mat. 5:44.

12. *Have not we restrained Prayer for Christians, as have differed from us? Whom we love we pray for: But have not our differences been so great, that we have excluded one another out of our Prayers, unless to reproach each other before the Lord? If a man see his Brother sin a Sin, which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them, that sin not unto death.* How seldom are we very serious and earnest wrestling with God for others, if in some things divided from us? If we had counted them Enemies, we should have so loved them as to have prayed for them. O that Abraham should pray so vehemently for the Sodomites and not we for Saints! That Samuel should pray for Saul, and not we for the Le

appointed ones ! Have not our differences interrupted not only civil, but all religious communion ? Yea, have not we neglected to pray, not only for dissenting Brethren, but for the reconciling of them ? How few are there, that pray heartily, feelingly, believingly, for the Peace of Hierusalem ; though there are many Promises to encourage us therein, that *his Name shall be one, and they shall worship with one shoulder, and Judah shall not envy Manassch ; nor Manassch vex Ephraim : And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them ?* Should we not also have been encouraged to pray for that, which Christ so affectionately desires ? Will not Petitions be welcome to Heaven for that, which would be the joy of all the Heavenly Host to see effected ? *Peace on earth among the Saints would be the joy of God, who is the God of Peace : of Christ, who is the Prince of Peace.* May we not confidently pray for what Christ sweat and bleed ?

Zech. 14.

19.

Jer. 32. 39.

13. *How unready have we been to respect and value the gifts and enoblements of such Christians ?* We have neither heartily prayed to God, that they might be useful, with all their Talents, for the good of many : nor blest the Father of Lights for communicating so much to them.

Not prising their gifts, nor blessing God for them.

14. *Hath not the Spirit in us lusted to Envy ?* Whom we love, we rejoyce at their fits and enjoyments ; but hath not a Spirit

Envyng them.

of *Cain* prevailed among us? Have not we envied, if others had greater acceptance with God, than our selves? Have we rejoiced at the gifts and graces of differently-perswaded Brethren, as if they were our own? or have not we (secretly at least) repined at others praises? Have not we been afraid that we and our party have been obscured thereby? Hath not this been evident in our being more backward to speak of their graces, than of their imperfections? Do not we gaze only on the Sun, and call in others to be spectators of it, when ecclipsed? Do not we like *Kites*, pass over the *found* sheep, and pitch on the *weak and dead Carion*? or like the *Butchers Dog*, not touch the *found flesh*, but the *offals and putrified pieces*? or like *Swine*, pass over the *flowers*, and wallow in the *Mire*? If we know one of a differing Congregation from ours, that hath a blemish, our mouths are full of him; but others graces, and heavenly walks we can pass over in silence.

Not helping them.

15. *Have not we refused to help such Christians?* We help what we can those whom we really love; But are not we like Spectators in a Tragedy (*Austin* complains of such in his time) who mourn much to see a sad story acted; but let the Play go on. True pitiful love would express it self by the hand as well as tongue. We read of *the labour of love* *love is bountiful*. We pretend to love all Saints; but what do we for those that are of differing persuasions from ours? If such an one be in

• Heb. 6 10.
1 Cor. 13.

•

Prison.

Prison, do we visit him? If *Naked*, do we cloath him? If *hungry*, do we feed him? If we remember all the Lords people, that are in bonds, as if we were bound with them, then do we really love them. We love our selves, and we are liberal to our selves; we can bestow time, care, estate, good things upon our selves; but not so on divided Brethren. We have words at will, Oyl and Butter in our mouths to supply them, *Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled*; but we give not those things, that are needful. Love will suffer any pains for the sake of the Beloved: So *Paul* loved all the Saints, that *he was willing to spend and to be spent*, like a Candle, to waste himself for their good. Which of us hath so spent himself? Love will counsel the Beloved, especially if in any straight; But God knows how little others have been beholding to us even this way: possibly we have afterwards insultingly told them, this you should have done, and herein you failed; but as we found them in a Ditch, so we left them, and directed them not to a way of deliverance. The best counsel we can give is for the Soul; but let the divided parties, yea and others, consider seriously and sadly how backward they have been, and are to this day, to advise to the best way for peace, holiness, and glory. If we believe such an undertaking will impair our Neighbours Name, estate, or Soul; yet how slow are we to interpose for the disswading of him from so unhappy an enterprize? I should hardly think that Parent loves his Child well, that sees him

Not sym-
pathizing
with them.

him run over a cliff, and with-holds him not what he can.

16. *Have not we been so far from helping them, that we have not sympathized with them?* Love is pitiful. When they have been sick, when did we get over our thresholds to enquire how it fared with them? How seldom have we felt their pains? If they be in an error, in a dangerous one, the more we should compassionate them, considering our selves also, who have the seeds of the same errors within us; considering the blindness of our own minds; how we also differ from others in some matters; how it is the Spirit, that leads into truth, &c. But have not some rejoiced, when any of a different persuasion have fallen into the *Bogs of Familism, Ranterisme, Quakerisme, &c.* that they may thence draw their absurd inferences against the whole body, whereto such an one was related? Yea how little have we laid to heart the afflictions of any of Gods people? Have not we been as unconcerned in their sufferings in *Germany, France, Holland, Piedmont, Ireland, &c.* How seldom have we had any great conflict for those whose faces in the flesh we never saw? Have not we been like *Jacobs Children*, unmerciful enough: sat down to eat and drink, and forgot *Joseph* in the Pit? Have not we had a late instance of this our hard-heartedness, when the *Plague* so forraged in *London*, and the parts adjacent? How little did we mourn with them that mourned? Perhaps fear lest the Flying Role might

might visit us, caused us a little to put finger into the eye. I must tell you (I wish I could weeping) that iniquity abounds, and the love of many waxeth cold.

17. Have not we been so far from sympathizing with them, that we have insulted over them? Real love vaunteth not it self, is not puffed up; But how have we vaunted over fallen Brethren, fallen into misery: that is bad; but fallen into sin, that is abominable? How oft have I known some high Professors making it an entertainment, a banquet for their Friends, to speak of the Spots, Vanities, Gestures, &c. of others different in some Opinions or Practices, from them, when their laughter hath given evident proof what contentment they took in the infirmities of their Brethren? *Ye are puffed up and have not rather mourned, &c.* said Paul to the Corinthians: and may not I say so to English-Professors? Have not we been worse than Dives's dogs; seeing they licked the soars of Lazzarus: whilst we have rub'd and fretted them, and insulted over his miseries?

Insulting
over them.
1 Cor. 13.
4.

1 Cor. 5. 2.

18. Have not we very unfaithfully published their secrets? We are wont to keep the secrets of those we dearly love, especially when they charge us, and we promise so to do; But how many of us are swift to hear, but not slow to speak of what we hear even under the roof? Few faithful Spirits, that conceal the matter. How many are there that creep into houses, yea farther into bosoms,

Publishing
their secrets.

Prov. 11.
13.

to

to know secrets, that they may inslave them to their wills, for fear of their publications or else when they have got what they can from them, most wretchedly betray the trust reposed in them? This makes me even to cry out *trust not in a Brother.*

Selfishness.

1 Cor. 13.

5.

19. *Have not we been selfish in our love? Charity seeketh not her own.* Observe it, the most love, that is going is *Publican-love*: we are careless of their company, or to have an intimacy with them, from whom nothing is likely to be returned: if a Professor be rich he hath many Friends, such as they be; but the poor is despised of his Neighbour. O! how base and mercenary is our love? Even your Ministers, to whom you have pretended dear and high affections, yet if they be laid by, or removed at a distance from you, that you cannot have them as a pleasant song to you, how strange are you instantly to them? How soon do you forget them? *Judas* may kiss you; but he hath a design upon you: *Jeshu* may salute; but he is worth nothing but his own base design.

Inconstancy.

1 Cor. 13.

4.

20. *Have not our love been inconstant? Real love is abiding; but do not we quickly exchange Friends? Do we keep them as long as an Almanack to the end of the year? Do not new pickt flowers tempt us to throw by the old? Charity suffereth long; But how soon is our love quenched? It makes a blaze; but soon is out, soon kindled, soon quenched: like Children, won with an Apple, lost with a Nut: How have we been at sword's point*

for

for every trifle? Those *seven ones*, one Body, one Spirit, one Hope, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, should have been as so many *quoines* to lock together all parts of the building into one; But alas! every extravagant, or extrinsecal opinion hath broken us and our hearts to pieces. Have not we been humourish, pievish lovers? Our love is dearly bought, and more hardly kept. Humour is like tinder, as soon on fire as touched: no love without conformity in every thing: we could hardly bed, board, or house together: unless we all said the same thing: we loved only whilst pleased, and our humours were not cross, but the least unkindness, the least difference, though our agreements were more by hundreds than our differences) would quench, or at least abate our love. *Charity is not easily provoked.* And to fulfill the law of love its requisite in the Apostles Judgement, that we bear one anothers burthens. But O! ever since I can remember, what a rigid, impetuous, and tyrannical commanding of an Uniformity in every punctilio hath there been? Though the pretence be love to Christs Church; yet if men would consult their own hearts, 'tis love of their own power, and Rule, and Lordship over their Brethren: and therefore the same party of men, when in the Saddle, when uppermost, have cryed for this rigid Conformity, *away with cursed toleration*, &c. and when reduced and brought lower, have as much commended

Charity,

1 Cor. 13. 5.
Gal. 6. 1.

Charity, Love, Forbearance in matters less momentous.

The greatness of this evil.

Now, when these things are *thus* among us, shall we sit still in silence and stupidity and suffer the sweet and soft fire of love quite to expire, and the wild-fire of passion and contention to spread and prevail, without moving a tongue or hand towards the repressing of the one, and reviving of the other? This were enough to make the dumb to speak; and therefore may justify my writing, when I may not speak; yea my expatiating a little in venting my thoughts about this great evil and the desires of my heart to redress it.

In its disobedience.

See Williams trans-
cendency of
Christ's love.

Chap. 9.

Sect. 3, 4,

5.

John 13.

33, 34, 35.

14, 12, 15.

12, 17.

Is it nothing to us, that hereby we are in a special manner guilty of disobedience to Jesus Christ? That all Christians would love one another, was our Lord Jesus his dying charge, which he frequently inculcated, sweetly insinuated, and powerfully enforced it as a Commandment, not a bare advice and counsel: It is a Commandment of Christ's own prescribing, A Commandment I give unto you: It is a Commandment given, as a special Love-token, in his last Will and Testament: It is a new Commandment, A new Commandment I give unto you: It is a most excellent Commandment, in a new Edition, corrected and amended, from the false glosses of the Scribes and Pharisees, and enlarged from his own example; Before it was only, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self; now it is, Love one another, as I have loved you: This new Commandment is not only

only given, but given again, and again, and again, by our dying Lord, to intimate, that as he had one Disciple, who went by the name of the Disciple whom Jesus loved: So he would have a darling Commandment, and that this should be it, Love one another; Yea, he calls it, These things, as if this one thing were all things, and disobedience to this Commandment, were disobedience to all.

Is it nothing to us, that hereby, as much as in us lies, we make the Prayer of Christ of none effect? Christ knew the evil of heart-burnings and divisions, of wrath and bitterness against one another (though we do not) and therefore having preached up love among his Disciples on earth, he sets upon praying down Union from his Father in Heaven, and what he insisted most upon in his Sermon, that he enlargeth most upon in his Prayer. And now I am no more in the World, but these are in the World, and I come to thee, holy Father, keep through thine own name, those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are: That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: That the World may believe, that thou hast sent me: And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them: that they may be one, even as we are one. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the World may know, that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

Is it nothing to us, that hereby we throw off Christ distinguishing Livery? By this shall all

men

Crossing
Christ's
Prayer.

John 17.
11, 21, 22
23.

Throwing
off Christ's
Livery.
Joh 13 35.

men know that you are my Disciples, if you have love one to another. He doth not say, Hereby you shall be my Disciples; but hereby it shall be known: Nor doth he say, Hereby shall know; nor hereby you shall know; but hereby shall others know: Nor doth he say, Hereby they shall guess and conjecture; but hereby they shall know, as by a sure and infallible sign: Nor doth he say, Hereby some, a very few, shall know this great secret; but hereby all men shall know: Nor doth he say, Hereby all men shall know, that you seem to be my Disciples; but that you are so indeed.

Represent-
ing Christ
as an Im-
posture.

John 17.

21, 23.

Making
Christ's
death of
none effect.

Is it nothing to us, that hereby we make the Jewes and Heathens look on Christ as an Impostour? How can they look upon him otherwise, whilst they see his Coat so full of seams, yea his Body so full of rents? Hereby we hinder the World from being convinced that Christ is sent of God: Christ therefore prayed, that His might be one, that the World may know, that God sent him.

Is it nothing to us, that hereby we make (as much as in us lyes) the Cross of Christ of none effect, and his blood to be shed in vain? Christ not only preached up Love, and prayed for it, but also paid for it. As he went from preaching up Love on Earth by his Sermon, to pulling it down from Heaven by Prayer: So he went from praying to paying for it, and the Price which he laid down for it, was his

Ephes. 2.

14, 15, 16. Blood, saith a late ingenuous Writer. For he is our Peace, who hath made both one, &c.

Having

having abolished in his flesh the enmity, &c. for to make in himself of twain, one new man, so making peace. And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body, by the Cross. Shall Christ dye to break down partition walls? and will we dare to keep them up? Shall he shed his blood for peace? and shall we imploy our wit and interest to blow the trumpet to War?

Is it nothing to us, that hereby we make Jews and Pagans call in question the truth of Gods promises? What can they think of those promises (that the Wolf and the Lamb shall feed together, they shall not hurt, nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord. That the Wolf also shall dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard shall lie down with the Kid: and the Calf and the young Lion, and the satling together, and a little Child shall lead them.) When the Lambs cannot fold together without pushing at one another.

Calling in question Gods Promises. Isa. 65. 25. II. 6.

Is it nothing to us, that hereby we grieve our dear Lord Jesus, and the ever blessed Spirit? May we not easily imagine what a grief it is to the head, to see the members of his body renting and tearing each other? to see heirs of the same hope, those that he together in the same bosome of Election, and whose Names are on his Breast, and whom he presents before his Father together in Heaven, to be thus broken assunder on earth? O! me thinks if we had any love to Jesus Christ, we should study to be of one affection. What Luther said once to the Ministers of Norim-

Grieving Christ, and the Spirit.

berg is very considerable: Suppose (said he) you saw Jesus Christ standing bodily in the midst of you, and thus bespeaking you, *What do you, O my dear Children! whom I have Redeemed by my blood, that you might mutually love one another.* — There is no danger in your difference, but there is much in your dissention: Do not thus sadden my Spirit: do not thus spoil the holy Angels of their joy in heaven: Am not I more to you than all your matters of difference. How can we expect the company of the Spirit of grace and peace, whilst such fiery contentions are amongst us? Were the Disciples quarrelling and contending, when the Holy Ghost fell on them? No. *They were all with one accord in one place. Where men dwell together in Unity, there the Lord commands the blessing for ever.* God will not (saith a learned man) sow the precious seed of his grace and love among bryars and thorns, the enemies of peace.

Acts 2. 1.
Psalm 133.
1.

Raising
Sion.

Is it nothing to us, that hereby we do (what in us lyes) to raise Sion, even to the foundation thereof? The stones support the building, by being coupled together. How can the house stand, when the stones are severed, when not a stone is left joyned to a stone? Every Kingdom divided against it self, is brought to dissolution: and every city or house divided against it self, shall not stand.

Matth. 12.
25.

Making re-
al Saints
weary to
support the
world any
longer.

Is it nothing to us, that hereby we make all Saints, the pillars of the World, weary of staying in the World; to support it any longer? It was the sight of the divisions among

Christians,

Christians, that made *Gryneus*, *Melancthon*, *Strigelius*, those pious and precious Souls weary of earth, and to wish and desire the wings of a Dove, that they might fly away, and be at rest in that place, where there is a rest remaining for the people of God, as from all other evils, so from this of divisions and dissensions among Brethren. It was the conjecture of one, that as Gods first Judgement against the old World was by Water, against the heat of Lust: so his last Judgement upon the World that now is, will be by Fire against the coldness of Love. If this be true, how do we hasten the great and terrible day by our coldness in Love one towards another?

Is it nothing to us, that hereby we gratifie the Devil, rejoyce the hearts of the wicked, and justify their reproaches of Saints? The great stratagem of Hell is to promote our differences, and to keep us from Union: all the bones they throw among us are to set us by the ears: the Devil knows that Societies of Christians are immortal, if they do not kill themselves by Division: *Divide & impera*, Divide them, and rule them is a maxime in Hell, and among the Antichristian party. If ye bite and devour one another a Consumption will be the consequent. Why should we be employed in the Devils work? Hath he not instruments and tongues enough of his own? O! how doth Antichrist get ground by the Animosities and Divisions among Christians? Certainly what *Tacitus* saith of some in his time, we may of the Papists and all our For-

Gratifying the Devil, rejoycing the wicked, and Justifying their reproaches of Saints.
Gal. 5. 19.

reign Enemies, *Nihil spei, nisi per discordiam habent.* All their hopes of ruining us arise from our homebred discords and divisions: Were all the Arrows in one bundle, they would by tryal and experience find it next to an impossibility to break them. Methinks the proud boasts of the Man of Sin should make us bury all our discords: were we but of one heart before God, and uniting our Prayers, the Mountains would become Plains, yea the seven Hills among the rest. Sure we do not consider where, and among whom we are. Are we not in the world, where Satan rules? Shall the Children quarrel in their Enemies quarters? Abraham sues for peace upon this, as a taking consideration, that we are Brethren and the Perrizite dwell in the land. Wicked men are Spectators of our fewds and discords. The very Heathen have calmed the mutinies of their Souldiers, by saying, your Enemies yonder behold your wondrous behaviour. What one said prophetically some years ago, I cannot but recal: that unless God did stir up some in the Protestant Churches, and clothe them with a mighty Spirit to accommodate our differences, the end of them may be, that our Enemies will laugh when we shall weep. Have we not Enemies enough, but must we be dogged and cruel to one another? We say the Fire burns the hotter for the cold weather: Would to God the Antiperistasis were blessed, that the cold abroad, the oppositions against us, may intensify our affections the more to God, to his ways.

Europe
Speculum.
p. 173.

to his people. And are not the wicked justified in their reproaches of the Saints, whilst they do but write after our Copy?

Is it nothing to us, that hereby we are perjured, yea often perjured, as oft we have received the Communion? "Christians (saith our great Usher) should remember, that as oft as they come to the Lords table, so oft do they enter into new bonds of peace, and tye themselves with firmer knots of love together, this blessed Communion being a Sacred Seal, not only of the Union, which we have with our head by faith, but also of our conjunction with the other members of the body, by love.

Perjury?

Lastly, Is it nothing to us, that hereby we hinder the forgiveness of our own iniquities? How can we hope we shall be forgiven, if we forgive not one another? How can we look that Scripture in the face, if ye forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses? Or that, with what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again? Would we have God deal with us, as we deal with our Brethren? These, and such like considerations, have made some, even of the Episcopal perswasion, to complain for want of love, and to sigh for more Charity towards Christians, though of different perswasions: "That in the case of unavoidable differences among good men (saith one.) there should be no more mutual charity,

Hindring pardon.

Mat. 6. 14, 15.

Mat. 7. 2.

Bishop Reyn. of the peace of the Church. p. 16, 17.

Bishop
Gaudens
Serm.
Printed
1660.

Bishop
Hall's Serm.
before his
Majesty,
1641.

Matth. II.
19.

“ meekness, moderation, tolerance, and hu-
 “ manity expressed, &c. this is a lamentati-
 “ on, and will be for a lamentation. Be-
 “ tween the *Episcopal*, *Presbyterian*, and *In-*
 “ *dependent* parties (saith a second) much
 “ of the acideness and sharpness of the hu-
 “ mour would be allayed, if this policy of
 “ charitable censure and interpretation were
 “ applied on all sides, &c. I should be glad
 “ to see the beams of this candour, this kind-
 “ ness, this charity, shine in all faces from all
 “ sides, that the *Shibboleths* of different dis-
 “ sects and designs, &c. might be laid aside
 “ by being all for Christ, &c. A third pre-
 “ sseth to a charitable construction of each
 “ others acts and intentions; because there
 “ is nothing in the world, which may not be
 “ taken with either hand, whether the right
 “ hand of favour, or the left of malice. We
 “ see the Son of God himself, in whom the
 “ Prince of this World could find nothing,
 “ yet was exposed to misconstruction, Be-
 “ hold a *Glutton*, &c. Good Lord! what un-
 “ charitable censures are men apt to pass up-
 “ on each other: Let a man be strict and
 “ austere in moral and divine duties, though
 “ never so peaceable, he is a *Puritan*, and
 “ every *Puritan* is an *Hypocrite*. Let him
 “ be more free, and give more scope to his
 “ conversation, though never so consciona-
 “ ble: he is a *Libertin*: Let him make ser-
 “ vice of any innovated form, he is a *Schi-*
 “ *matick*: Let him stand for the ancient
 “ received Rites and Government, he is a
 “ *sim*

time-serving Formalist. — Let me tell you
 "he is right, that hath a right heart to
 "his God, what forms soever he is for. *The*
 "*Kingdom of God doth not stand in meats and*
 "*drinks, in Stuffs, or Colours, or Fashions,*
 "*in Noyces or Gestures: it stands in Holi-*
 "*ness and Righteousness, &c.* Let us study
 "now, not to widen, or gall, or ranckle; but
 "how to salve, and heal, &c. I shall conclude
 this Chapter with *beseeching, yea conjuring*
 you in the words of the Apostle Paul to the *Phil. 2.*
Philippians: If there be therefore any consolation 1, 2.
in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of
the Spirit, if any bowwells, and mercies; Fulfill ye
my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same
love, being of one accord, of one mind.

non potuisset ex palmarum sepas, ubi quot verba; tot tela, que nimium
animas nostros percellant, &c. Mortoni sent. de pace procuranda
inter Evangel. p. 25.

O quam sa-
cro fascino
usus est?
Ipsa suada
credo, sile-
qui posset,



CHAP. XXXIII.

Church-
Members
miscarri-
ages.

*The faults of Church-members towards
those of their particular Congregations.*

Usefulness
and un-
faithful-
ness.

1. **Y**OU have Professed in your Creed to be-
lieve the Communion of Saints: You
have been admitted to the Priviledges of the
Communion: you thought it not safe, or good
for man to be alone; to live retired from the
Society of Saints: you have been imbedded
among the Saints in Jerusalem, which came
down from above: you have with some Soli-
tarity engaged your selves to be faithful to the
Souls of your Brethren: and yet what un-
profitable Hermit hast thou been in Zion? Like
a wild-beast thou comest out of thy Den for
thy prey, to feed upon the Mountains of Sion,
to enjoy the provisions of Gods house; but
immediately thou retirest, and art no way pro-
fitable to the Body. It is a wonder to me
how Christians can content themselves with
the Priviledges of Gods house, and neglect the
mutual duties, that are incumbent on them.
A learned man complains of many Ministers
that they are but Traditional-Preachers: and
I fear there are too many Traditional-Christians.

us, who are very zealous for the practising of some Duties, which they have received from their Fore-fathers, whilst they can over-look many expresse Commandments, obliging them to take care, as Members of the Natural Body do, each for other. The Apostle tells us, that the meanest Members in the Church yet are necessary. But alas! How many are there, who shut up their Light in dark lanterns? who immure themselves within their own walls? who are so involved in worldly businesses, and have so little care and zeal for the house of God, that they no way profit, no way edifie their Brethren? How can such over-look those plain expresse requiries of Christ by his Apostle? Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edifie another. Wherefore comfort (or exhort) your selves together, and edifie one another; I wish I could add, as the Apostle doth, even as also ye do. For as much as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the Church. Let all things be done to edifying. From whom (i. e. Christ) the whole body fleshy joyned together, and compacted by that which every joine supplyeth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of it self in love. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. Let every one of us please his Neighbour, for his good to edification. For

Rom. 14.

19.

1 Thess. 5.

11.

1 Cor. 14.

12, 26.

Ephes. 4.

16.

V. 29.

Rom. 15.

2, 3.

even

- Heb. 3. 13. even Christ pleased not himself, &c. But hurt one another daily, while it is called to day, lest any of you be hardened, through the deceitfulness of sin. And let us consider one another to provoke unto love, and unto good works. Not forsaking the assembling of our selves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. None are excluded: it is every mans work. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. Look diligently, lest any man sail of the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness springing up, trouble you, and thereby many be defiled. If they do not over-look, how dare they contemn, all these Commandments of our Lord Jesus Christ? How can they look upon themselves as no way concerned in these duties? It is a Lamentation, and should be for a Lamentation, that so many Church-members, like Birds of prey, flye alwayes alone; and through spiritual sloth, through a lothness to displease, through want of charity and pity to the Souls of their Brethren, suffer them to perish in carelesness, sensuality, formality, &c. rather than they will labour to quicken, reprove and save them. An Ingrosser is hateful to men; But of how much sorer punishment shall ye be thought worthy, who ingross your graces, your gifts, your experiences, where-with a Church of Christ might be edified: Every man is a Steward, (Give an account of

But *Stewardship*) But you are Stewards in an
 special manner: You are Stewards of the
 gifts of the Spirit, which are given to profit
 the Church. How dare ye *hide your Talents* in a
 Napkin? You have a greater trust committed
 to you, than others have: You have Souls
 committed to your care; for Church-Mem-
 bers are to care even naturally one for ano-
 ther. If God hath two Servants, and he in-
 trusts one with his *Lumber*, the other with
 his Children; and if both be negligent: sure
 he shall suffer the *biggest indignation* from the
 Lord, who neglects the Children. What are
 you afraid, you shall have the less light, the
 less grace, the less comfort from Christ, for
 that others share with you? And therefore
 will ye turn *Ingrossers* and *Monopolists*? O!
 know the more *useful* you are to invite the
 Children to their Father, the more you your
 selves will be *enriched* and supplied; and
 whilst you are *dividing your loaves*, God will
 act at a *wonderful rate* for you; the bread will
 multiply: you shall receive, whilst you are
disbursing: your light and heat will increase
 by your holy *dispensing* it.

2. *How is godly conference neglected even* among Church members? What! are you
 ashamed of your God? is the speaking of
 grace and glory some kind of disparagement
 to your tongues? When Saints come toge-
 ther, time, precious time is devoured in
back-biting, in *undue*, *unseasonable censuring*
 of absent persons, who are not capable of
 making their defence, or else in *foolish im-*
pertinent

Neglect-
 ing godly
 Confe-
 rence.

pertinent discourses of worldly matters. Fe-
like the Disciples in their journey to Emma-
discourse of such matters, as Christ him-
joyns with them in, and causeth their hearts
to burn: When do you warm one another
hearts, and fit each other to enter into Com-
munion with God in secret? How do many
complain of you, that their hearts are estran-
ged from God by converses and intimacies
with you, and that they lose their affections
by keeping up correspondencies with you? and
therefore count it their wisdom to retire into
their closets, rather than misspend precious
hours in foolish communications with such
barren, frothy, empty Professors. How
many weak Christians are there, who are
not acquainted with the wiles of Satan, and
they sit down pensive and dejected, thinking
no condition like theirs, and conclude here-
upon that they are none of Gods Children,
whom (if you were spiritual, pitiful, active,
and free to acquaint them with your own ex-
periences, that you have been tempted as
they) you might succour under their tempta-
tions, and comfort with the comforts, where-
with you have been comforted, and ease
them by hearkning to their doubts and com-
plaints, and shewing them a way how to de-
liver their Souls; Were you of a Christ-like
Spirit, you would not break these bruised
reeds, nor quench these smoking flaxes; but
rather blow up their graces, and labour to
scatter and disperse those fogs and mists,
which over-cloud their Souls: you should

eyes to the blind; but you are not: you could be of a merciful Spirit to all Souls: especially to the Souls of all Saints, especially to the Souls of those Saints, whom you are peculiarly related; but you are not. In the old Law God took care of *afflictions*: if they lay under a burthen, Israel was to help them. Doth God take care for beasts? and will not ye for men, for Saints, for the *servants of the Lord*? God requires of you, that you comfort the feeble minded. The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. Christ expects his own with increase. They that feared the Lord spake often one to another, to comfort one another with the promises of God made to his people, against the flourishing of the wicked, and overflowing of ungodliness: and the Lord hearkned and heard it, and a book of Remembrance was written before him, &c. the Lord books that good service, he put it upon record; But though the Lord hearkneth and hears, yet he seldom finds us so employed: our neglects are sealed up in his bag. I pray God we may lay it to heart, repent and reform. Bernards complaint may justly be revived: Not a word of the Scriptures, nothing of the Salvation of the Soul; but trifles and toys, laughter, and words as light as the wind, eat up the time. I know there have been too many Uzza's amongst us, who have had an itching desire to be singing of the Ark, thinking of themselves more highly than they ought to think, and like the ambitious Sons of Levi, taking too much

Exod. 23. 6.
1 Thess. 5.
14.
1 Cor. 12. 7.
Mal. 3. 16.

*N'hil de
Scripturis,
n'hil de sa-
lute Anima-
rum agitur;
sed nugæ &
risus, &
verba pro-
feruntur
inventum.*

much upon them, whereby the Ministry has suffered much contempt. The Lord scourges these daring Phaetons, who have set the world in a flame hereby: But let not us run from one extreame into another. Let us give to

Jude v. 20. *Ministry their due; and yet not neglect to build up our selves in our most holy faith. Mutual duties should be exercised between Christian and Christian: The Apostle is expressive in the places already quoted: I shall*

Col. 3. 16. *one more, Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another. O! if God would be with us so far, as to make me an instrument to prevail with you to go, and visit one another and stir up one another, that knowing the terrors of the Lord, you may persuade men. O! bewail thy unserviceableness, thy privy spiritedness, thy want of love and bowels to others; especially now, when the Ministerial help fails to such a degree, and when there is so great an Apostasie. Sure, there is no time, wherein Christian-fellowship is more called for, and wherein it may be more profitable, than at this time; But alas! How are the wise as well as the foolish Virgins asleep, generally secure, without action, and way useful to each other, no more than they are, who are fast asleep in their beds and rest? O! how few are there like Jonathan and David? how few enter into a brotherly promise to exhort one another, to call one another to account, to tell one another their fears, to know of one another their grow-*

linistry in Religion? We are proud, and loth to
 ord for our nakedness appear: yea some of us
 t the w few stories to tell of Gods goodnes and
 s run to our Souls, and we hate a disco-
 give to, how low, earthly, vain, backslide-
 neglect we are: Hence reserved to each other;
 ish. Man God will bring forth the hidden works of
 een Christ.

expressed. How is Fraternal correction neglected or Not ad-
 I shall in the managing? Some totally neglect admonishing,
 well in giving their Brethren: Gallie-like, they or not
 admonish care for these things, they are little aright.
 e with deemed whether God be honoured, or
 nt to be honoured.

Others delay admonition. The Flesh is Either
 g the backward to this self-denying work, and so neglecting
 men. O in many weighy circumstances, which shoud it altoge-
 y priving the Offendor to Repentance, are forgot: ther, or
 bowd the Offendor is also hardened in his Sin. He delaying it.
 Mind thinks by thy silence, thou art altogether like
 nd who to him: so he judgeth of Gods silence,
 e, then things hast thou done, and I kept silence, Psal. 50. 21.
 b is more thoughtest I was altogether such an one as
 more by self: so he judgeth of thy silence. Is
 ! How much easier to fetch out a spot of ink from a
 Virgin both the day it is stained, than afterwards.
 tion, in Sin like a Mole, will quickly bury it self, and
 ore this be longer let alone, the harder it is to dig it
 r bedso. The longer a disease is let alone, the har-
 Fonsthe cured: Cronical diseases are seldom a-
 rotherly credit to the Physitian. Besides if you neg-
 call on the Reproof this day or hour, perhaps by
 er this be new he will commit the same Sin again; for
 grow either he knows it not to be a sin, or in case
 he

he knows it, yet every new act doth strengthen the habit of sin. It is the nature of sin to blind the Mind, to stupifie the Conscience, and to harden the heart. *Exhort therefore* Heb. 3. 13. *one another daily, while it is called to day, any of you be hardened through the deceiving of sin.* If the sinner add sin to sin, put it to your account for neglecting the Ordinance of God for his reducement: If he loseth the favour of God, and neglects hereupon private communion with the Lord, put it to thy account: If at length he becomes insensible in sin, so that, like a *Bedlam*, he is not the pricks of sharp admonition, put this to your account, because you have failed to cure, to heal, to save the Soul of your Brother. A timely reproof might have saved a Soul, and covered a multitude of sins. Besides, *have you time at your command* that you with *Felix*, will do your duty in a more convenient season? Mayst not thou die, or the Offender dye? and both in sin, thou in the sin of Omission, and he in the sin of Commission unrepented of, before the day cometh wherein thou art resolved to tell him roundly of his fault? Why art not thou trembling with fear of blood-guiltiness? Is Soul and ther no sin with thee? Or *have you the Holy Ghost at command*? Without the Holy Spirit's assistance, and concurrence, your labours will be in vain, you will get a blot by reproving, the delinquent will flye in your face, hate you for telling the truth, he will add sin unto sin, and perhaps put you into

time too : and must the Holy Ghost dance attendance on you ? If you observe his hours : must you go presently whilst the wound is fresh and bleeding ; but if you neglect his calls, it is a question, whether your hour will be Gods.

Others miscarry in reprovng. Some reprove, but not privately ; though Christ be so express in it, *If thy Brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone* : though the Law of Charity binds us to cover our Brothers nakedness, as much as we can. *Love covereth all sins* ; yet some Doege-like backbite their Neighbour, and tell it to every one save him, who should hear of it. How few modestly, affectionately and humbly, in the most private manner communicate their fears of sins, decayes, and infirmities to the supposed delinquents ? Are not most too forward sinfully and wickedly to divulge their undue suspitions to others, whereby the names of some suffer, Souls lye neglected, prejudices and heart-burnings are promoted, Schism is made in the body of Christ. Though the Law of Wisdom bind us not to use more means than needs must, if gentle private reproofs will serve to reclaim, not to blazon infirmities, yet Professors through pride, envy, want of Charity, at least want of wit, publish on the house-top what is done in a corner. Herein we do, as we hate to be dealt with, were it our own concernment : Hereby we make the Offender to hate us, and beget in him due prejudices

Or mis-
carrying
in it, not
reprovng
privately.
Matth. 18.

15.
Prov. 10.
12.

*Si solus no-
sti, & vis
coram pluri-
bus arguere,
non es Cor-
rector, sed
Proditor.*
Augustin.

ces, against us, viz. that we thirst to draw the blood of his Name : yet how many Church-Members are peccant herein? It will be hard to make him believe thou comest to *heal* his soul, if thou hast already *wounded* his Name. Have not some Church-members been for bringing it immediately to the Church ? Hereby innumerable evils ensue, many are grieved, many offended, the party that is impeached stands on his guard, pleads for his sin, extenuates it, or is strengthened in his sin by the uncharitable proceeding, and irregular acting of the Brother, who first took cognizance of the misarrriage, and so *Judah justifies Samaria*.

Reproving self-ishly.

Others reprove that those injuries that have been offered to them may be recompenced, rather than that their Brothers Soul may be healed, and it appears herein, if the wrong done them may be remedied, little do they heed, whether there be any other Repentance. They reprove not to gain their Brother ; but to make gain of him : and therefore *Jehoiada*, they drive furiously in their own cause, but in *Gods* they are dumb and dull enough.

Reproving only for disputable things.

Other busie-bodies would be thought very tender of Christs honour, they *tythe Mint and Annise*, &c. they reprove such things as are disputable, and neglect to reprove, where there are too many just accusations to lay in. They will be very severe in censuring their Brethren for their Hairs, Cloathes, or some controverted recreations ; and yet let them alone to live in worldliness, sensuality, lukewarmness, pride, sloth, &c.

Others

Reproving
Magisteri-
ally.

Gal. 6. 1.

Reproving
lightly.

Others are so Magisterial in their reproofs, as if they had forgotten that they are in the body, as if they had no native corruption remaining in them, they want the Spirit of meekness, they have forgotten the Apostles Brethren, *if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the Spirit of meekness, &c.* O! how haughtily do some carry it towards offending Brethren. I wish you would fling the first stone at your selves. If you are not guilty of the same offence, yet you are of others, at least you have the seed of the same Sin within you. O that offending Brethren might know that it is only Conscience of duty, that brings you to them, and that it is love to their Souls puts you upon such displeasing work to your flesh; But wo and alas! How few will condescend? The work is not managed with that humility as it ought, and therefore no Brother is gained.

Others are so light, frothy, and unserious in this business, that they spoil all. They do not invoke God to accompany them in the work, they do not cry out, *who is sufficient?* They forget it is Soul-work they are imployed in, they forget how abortive such labours have been, they do not set upon it with that fear and trembling, which they should. Few rebuke with authority, as having Gods Glory, and mens Everlasting Salvation in their eye: and hence, when they come off from this work, their Conscience smites them, that they have been no more seri-

ous and fervent in a matter that concerns life and death.

Putting an
end to Re-
proof too
soon.

Few continue their admonitions, and follow them, till the Delinquent be brought to confession, repentance and amendment. We tire, and put the ill names of Dogs and Swine upon our offending Brethren, to excuse our sloth, and to take off that diligence about their Souls, which their dulness, and hardness of heart calls for. We should meekness instruct them, though they oppose themselves: We should bear with their present stubbornness and abuses, and wait till God peradventure will give them repentance. We forget how many years God waited on us, though we were stout, stubborn and refractory, how patient and long-suffering he was unto us. Though the more we love, the less we are beloved; though men revile in our faces: yet we should do as our Lord, and his Ministers, not presently shake the dust of our feet against them.

Not bearing Re-
proof
Christian-
ly.

4. *How few behave themselves Christianly under Reproof?* When men come to you from the great God, to discharge the duty they owe to your Souls, your behaviour should be such, that none will meddle with such Reproofs, to dress their wounds, if the Lord had not charged them with this Commission.

Not lovingly.

How few receive a Reproof kindly and Christianly? This makes me fear, that there are more Hypocrites in Churches, than we are aware of. It is a great mercy to be

proved

proved, As many as I love, I rebuke. To Rev. 3. 19.
 sin against Reproof, is aggravated wicked-
 nesses. The revolvers are profound to make
 slaughter, though I have been a rebuker of Hos. 5. 2.
 them all. It is an argument of hatred, not
 to reprove, Thou shalt not hate thy Brother in
 thine heart, thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy Lev. 19. 15.
 Neighbour, &c. Yet how are they counted
 turbulent, pragmatical, void of affection,
 rigid and censorious, who will not let them
 go on in their sin. He that bates reproof, Prov. 15.
 shall surely dye. There is not a sadder Omen, 10.
 that God hath an endless controversie with
 thee. I know (saith the Prophet to Ama-
 ziah) the Lord hath determined to destroy 2 Chron.
 thee, because thou hast not hearkned to my re- 25. 16.
 proof. Others seem to hearken to the Re-
 prover, and give him verbal thanks for his
 plain dealing: but from that day their hearts
 boyl inwardly, and they are filled with pre-
 judice, which will express it self, when
 ever it meets with a fair opportunity. How
 few do engage some Friend, to be a faithful
 Monitor to them, to be open-hearted to them,
 in telling them their faults? We are so over-
 run with self-love, that we think no stan-
 der by can discern so much as we; and we
 are so unwilling to be censured, that we
 stand aloof from having such a Looking-glass
 near us, to reflect our spots to us: Few, with
 David, would count it a kindness, for the
 righteous to smite them.

How few do amend upon a solemn serious Not obedi-
 reproof? How few retire to their Closets, ently.

and there upon their knees bless God for emboldning any to tell them of their Sin, and there beg pardon and strength to reform, and enter into a religious vow by the grace of God to amend whatever is amiss?

Minding
only the
pleasing of
themselves.
Rom. 15.
1, 2, 3.

5. Most Professors seek to please themselves and not their Neighbour. A man would think they never read, *we that are strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not please our selves.* Let every one please his Neighbour for his good to edification; For our Christ pleased not himself, &c. Professors are self-willed, they will walk to the utmost of their liberty, and if others be offended, they have little care for grieving and stumbling the weak Brethren. They will tell you in the pride of their hearts and loftiness of their Spirits, the weak must be satisfied: But what if they cannot? O! how opposite are Professors to the Apostles condescending frame? They think that in different circumstances the weak should follow the strong, and therefore slight what they think of their actions. But what saith the Apostle

Gal. 5. 13. *Use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh.* Knowledge puffeth up, but Charity edifieth. "firm and full knowledge of our liberty in things indifferent, (saith a learned man) if it be separated from Charity, is apt to swell the mind with Pride, and make us to despise, and set at naught, weak, doubting, and scrupulous Brethren; but Charity is carefull to avoid what may stumble the weak, and cause them to fall into Sin."

"and therefore judge this rather, that no man
 "put a stumbling or occasion to fall in his Bro-
 "thers way by the use of indifferents. Hast
 "thou faith, concerning the lawfulness of
 "the use of things indifferent? (for of them
 "the Apostle speaks) have it unto thy self
 "before God, make not a vain publication
 "thereof, to the exasperating, grieving, or
 "stumbling of the weak, who may by thy
 "example, even against Conscience, use
 "the same liberty that thou dost, and so
 "through thy knowledge shall thy weak Bro-
 "ther perish, i.e. thy using this liberty hath
 "a tendency to destroy him: You may think
 "this is no great matter; But the same A-
 "postle informs you, that you hereby sin a-
 "gainst Christ, you destroy the work of God,
 "the Soul of thy Brother, and no man on
 "earth can privilege you from the wrath of
 "God, if you destroy them with your meats
 "(with the use of your liberty) for whom
 "Christ dyed, and therefore the Apostle profes-
 "seth, if meat make my Brother to offend, I will
 "eat no flesh, while the world standeth, lest I make
 "my Brother to offend. O! that men were so
 "humble as Paul, in the condescension of their
 "Charity; But alas! All men seek their own things:
 "if they are satisfied concerning the lawfulness
 "of the things, they look no farther: they little
 "mind the souls of their Brethren; but are se-
 "curing themselves some outward peace, and
 "earthly advantages. Few naturally care for the
 "good of others, for the glory of God, and the
 "edification of their Brethren.

Rom. 14.

13, 22.

I Cor. 8. 11.

I Cor. 8.

11, 12.

Rom. 14.

20.

I Cor. 8.

13.

Valuing
Christians
by exter-
nals.

6. How are Christians valued and preserved by externals, rather than by internals? By gold rings, by outward honors and privileges, rather than by their graces? They who should have most of your esteem, love and respect, have least. A rich Formalist company is more prized, than an humble mortified, poor Christians. The miscarriage that was in the Apostles dayes, is descended to this age, and is a blot upon many of the Professors of it: O my Brethren

Jam. 2. 1. Have not the Faith of our Lord Jesus Christ the Lord of glory, with respect of persons? How are mens judgements blinded by some external glory and appearance; so that a little in a great, rich, honourable man, is counted much; and much grace in a poor man is despised, over-looked, and accounted but little? How do the rich contemn the poor? How are the poor neglected in visits? But a rich, though formal Professor, shall have many Friends. How common is it for the rich to enjoy Ordinances together, and exclude the poor? You go to the houses of the rich, but seldom go over the threshold of the poor: and yet what said Christ to him that bade him? When thou makest a Dinner or Supper, call not thy Friends, nor thy Brethren, neither thy Kinsmen, nor thy rich Neighbours, lest they also bid thee again, and recompence be made thee; but when thou makest a Feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompence thee; but thou shalt be recompenced at the

1 Cor. 11.
22.

Luke 14.
12, 13, 14.

condition of the just. You do not value
 men by their eminency in grace, but in parts
 and worldly endowments: as if gold did set
 them off more than grace. Those who have
 most of *Cæsar's Image*, are held in higher re-
 veration, than those who have most of *God's*
Image. What a reflexion is this upon the
 great and blessed God? *Paul durst know no*
man after the flesh; yet dare you esteem men
 by their fleshly greatness in the world. When
 you should fix your affections, where you
 see most grace, you are taken where you see
 either most of the world, or most gifts,
 prudence, learning, or most morality. You
 know, that you *bestow not most honour on the*
uncomely parts, on them who have least of
 worldly Priviledges, though the Apostle, yea
 God expects it. How rough and rigorous
 are you to poor men, if over-taken in a
 fault? how is his offence aggravated? how
 severely is he censured? But if a rich mans
 transgression be the same, or more to be ag-
 gravated from the light it hath affronted, and
 from the danger of its scandal; yet how is it
 past by, extenuated, if not excused and par-
 doned? O! This *having mens persons in ad-*
miration, over-reverencing men for worldly
 things, is a great disparagement to the grace
 of God, as if riches and honours were more
 excellent than Religion and Grace: They who
 are *highly descended,* or who relate to the
 Courts of Princes, or who have their stores in
 their houses, are in greater esteem than
 others, who are descended from above, who
 are

2 Cor. 5.
16.

1 Cor. 12.

Jam. 2. 2,
3, 4, 5.

are related to the God of Heaven, who
Favourites in the New Jerusalem, and
have store of grace in their hearts. O my
Brethren! If there come into your Assembly
with a gold ring, and there cometh also a
man in vile rayment, and you have respect
him that weareth the gay clothing, &c.
not you partial in your selves? Have not
made a difference, a groundless difference,
a difference grounded on carnal respects,
not upon solid reason? Are not ye
judges of evil thoughts? Have not you
your judgement of such persons, according
to the dictate of your own evil thoughts,
not according to the rule of the Word? O
how seldom do Professors value and re-
spect as God doth? Let rich Professors be
sick, or under any other stroke of Gods
hand, what ado is there? what running to
him? what sending after him? what ende-
vours to comfort him? But O! how are the
poor of the Church despised? Little sending
to them, though they want necessities for
their Bodies, in the time of their Visitation,
and their Souls are ready to sink, for want
of a word in season. Your frequent visiting
of some, when under Gods hand, and sel-
dom resorting to others, when in the same
extremity, evidenceth, that you despise the
poor: Yea, are not you ashamed to be in the
company of a mean Christian? or to call a
poor Christian, Brother? to own any such
near relation to him? And yet the Lord is not
ashamed to call such, Brethren: Go to my
Bre-

Jam. 2. 6.
Heb. 2. 11.
Joh. 20. 17.

who children, &c. But wo and alas ! the same
and mind is not in us, which was in Christ Jesus :
O my learn of me ; for I am holy. But we are Matth. 23.
proud and haughty ; and we learn of the high
mighty of the Earth to despise others of
lower condition , than our selves. The
&c. proud rich man can be content to claim kin-
red of Abraham, he calls him, Father A-
braham ; but you read not that ever he said, Luke 16.
brother Lazarus. *It will not serve us , nor*
serve us (saith a late Bishop of England) to
be able to say, Abraham is our Father, except
we will charitably acknowledge the poorest Chri-
stian, even Lazarus for our Brother. Besides
how soon is a rich Formalist admitted to Fel-
lowship ? How hardly the Godly, if poor ?

7. *How do they who count themselves Chri-
stians of the highest form, who have had great
acquaintance with Christ and his wayes, who
have had a long experience of Christs sweet-
ness, and Satans deceits , keep by themselves,
with the neglect of the lambs, of them who are
but of yesterday, and know little of the mind
of God ? How do we slight them (Christ
did not so) who have but a mite or two for
to cast into the treasury, I mean, who can
contribute but little to their gifts or graces.
They that are poor in spirit, as well as poor
in the world, have but very little respect now
adays : whereas we should treasure and re-
spect the smallest dust of Gold and Pearl : we
should resemble the Lord Jesus Christ : his
greatest care seems to be of the Lambs. Feed
my Lambs. The Children in the Cradle, and
when*

Slighting
weak, as
well as
poor Chri-
stians.

when they begin to take their feet should then be most dandled, should then mostly be held up, they then should be never out of hand. If ye are Fathers, ye are unnatural ones, if you throw off the care of all the Children, that need your care, and take care of them who need it not. As grace, for growth in grace, is given to edifie the body of Christ, the eye is not for it self, but for the blind members, to lead them in paths of Righteousness. Your care should be like Gods: his care is for the least Fly, as well as for the greatest of the creatures. Christ did not will the Salvation of one believer more than another, he dyed equally for all, all believers stand alike justified through the blood of Christ, Christ knocks at the poor mans door, as well as the rich, if Christ makes any difference, it is in this, the poor weak Christian hath more expressions of his love and affection, than the strong have, he shews most pity to the greatest objects of pity, to those that are in greatest want: yea the young Saint at his first Conversion, when he lately dropt from the Womb of the Gospel, when he is but a Babe in Christ, a sucking Infant, he hath more kisses and embraces, more joy and comfort, than (perhaps) he meets with till he be a grown man, and old man in Christ, till he be not only a gracious, but a glorified Saint. The very Philosopher observes that by Nature Parents are still carried with their greatest affections to the Child that is youngest; because that is com-
monly

monly most indigent, that is most hug'd in the bosome, dandled on the knee, kiss'd and smiled upon. I wish there were more of this *Nature* even among *supra-natural* Christians. It is lamentable to see how little honour is bestowed upon the *weaker vessels*, and how few there are to be found, that carry the lambs in their bosomes (next their hearts) and gently lead those that are with young.

8. *How little compassion is shew'd to fall'n Brethren?* to such as are overtaken with a fault, yea with many? When their hearts, like the sluggards fields, are overgrown with weeds, we do not lend them our Spade, and Mattock, and Knife: we do not labour to pull the brands, that are half burnt, out of the fire: to save our selves this labour, we deem them Cast-awayes, as if there were no hope of their Restitution and Salvation, we never more look after them, to be sure, we do not as the blessed Apostle *John* did, who (as *Eusebius* relates in his Ecclesiastical History) ran after the back-slidden Professor, who was turned an *High-way-man*, to take him by holy guile, and to recover him out of the snares of Hell. We carry it, as if we held, that sins committed after Conversion were unpardonable. Art thou a stranger to thy own heart? If not, thou knowest God pittieeth thee, though thou fallest seven times a day, and it ill becomes thee, who hast been so oft holpen out of the deep ditch, to deny help to thy Brother, that

Not compassionate-
ing fallen
Brethren.

Matth. 18.
32, 33, 34.

that lyes there, and perhaps will perish if none be more merciful than thyself. Are there no solemn engagements upon thy Soul towards thy Neighbour? Will not God take thee by the throat for thy unmercifulness? *O thou wicked Servant, I forgave thee all thy debt, because thou desiredst me: shouldst not thou have had compassion upon thy fellow-Servant, even as I had pity on thee? Verily, the Lord is wroth with you, and if this be not amended, he will deliver you to the Tormentors, till you shall pay all that is due unto him.* O! Repent of your defectiveness in this thing. Multitudes are hastening to the Valley of Decision, multitudes are departed from their former Profession, some of them are become scandalous: their sins will lye at your doors, and their blood too, if you, through unfaithfulness, or through negligence, or through fainting, endeavour not to restore them, to set the bones again, that are unhappily dislocated. *Ye which are Spiritual, restore, &c.* Are ye all Carnal? are none of you Spiritual? If there be one, here is work for him, as he will answer the contrary at his peril.

Gal. 6. 1.

Groundless
separation.

Heb. 10. 25.

9. *On how uneasie and sinful (because unwarrantable) accounts, do many withdraw from the Communion of their Brethren? What have not they read, or heard, Forsake not the assembling of your selves together, as the manner of some is? It was then dangerous not to separate, but it was more dangerous to separate: Not to separate was dangerous to the outward*

ward man : but to separate was dangerous to the inward man. When ever you hear of Demas, that *he hath left us*, the next news you will hear of him, is, *he hath embraced this present World*. If the Devil can, like a subtle Custer on the road, draw thee off from thy company, he will soon cut the throat of thy Profession. Its no wonder to hear an house is robbed, that stands alone from Neighbours. *Two are better than one*. The Church of God is compared to a City, the weak walls of the houses therein, would never endure a blustering wind ; but by their Neighbour-hood and Contiguity, they succour each other : But when one stands divided, the next news you may expect to hear of, is a fall, and if it be a towring house, the fall is great. And yet alas ! upon every prejudice and discontent, if one Brother falls out with another, presently the whole Congregation is threatned with the loss of the prejudiced and discontented party's company, and condemned for the miscarriages of one, and perhaps the supposed Offendor hath not the liberty to know his Offence, in order to his Repentance, nor the Church regularly acquainted therewith.

10. The last great Evil among Church-Members, that I shall mention, is, *Their withdrawing from every Brother that walks disorderly, when under Censure*. How solemnly is this required by the Apostle ? Now we command you, Brethren, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw your selves

Not separating from Persons under Censure.

2 Thess. 3. 6.

selves from every Brother, that walks disorderly. Who can tell what blessed effects Gods own Censures their eyes might have seen, had not Professors been herein guilty? By a general dislike the person censured might soon be convinced and humbled. Undoubtedly it was your duty to have added weight unto the Discipline of Christ, where you could, and to discountenance those whom the Lord had discarded. Instances are not wanting of such as God hath brought to repentance by the strangeness of such as were once their Fellow-members. Possibly you may be condemned for such a carriage, but if ever God bring such Censured persons to Repentance, though it be upon their death-bed, though it be in a forrign Countrey, God will not suffer them to depart quietly, till they have acquitted, yea justified your carriage towards them.



CHAP. XXVII.

Their miscarriages towards Sinners.

Church-members associating with the Profane.

I. **M**ay not too much familiarity with profane wretches be justly charged upon Church-members? I know man is a social creature; but that will not excuse Saints

to their carelessness of the choice of their company. The very Fowls of the Air, and Beasts of the Field, love not Heterogeneous company : *Birds of a Feather flock together.* I have been afraid, that many, who would be thought eminent, of an high stature in grace and godliness, yet see not the vast difference there is between Nature and Regeneration, Sin and Grace, the Old and the New Man, seeing all company is alike unto them. And is it not thus with thee ? Is it not all one, whether thou art with a Child of God, or with a Child of the Devil ? Are not those fit Companions for thee, who slight and rebell against God every day ?

O ! How few consult and believe the Scriptures setting forth the enmity of wicked men against Gods people ? The Scripture tells us, *They eat up Gods people, as bread,* which implies a strange inclination in them to devour the Saints, and that they take as great delight therein, as an hungry man in eating, and that it is natural to them to molest them : The Scripture compares them, for their hurtfull qualities, to *Lyons and Bears,* to *Foxes* for subtilty, to *wild Bulls,* to *greedy Swine,* to *Scorpions,* to *Bryars and Thorns,* (grievous and vexing things.) The Scripture represents them as industrious and unwearied in their bloody Enterprizes, they cannot sleep without doing mischief : *Herodias* had rather have the blood of a Saint, than half of a Kingdom : *Haman* would pay a great Fine to the King, for the scattered Jews (who

Whence ?
From not believing the enmity that is in the seed of the Serpent against the seed of the Woman.
Psal. 14. 4.
Prov. 28. 15.
Isa. 51. 20.
Psal. 22. 12.
Mat. 7. 6.
Ezek. 2. 6.
Prov. 4. 16.

keep not the Kings laws) may be cut off. Wicked men will run the hazard of damning their own Souls, rather than not fling a dagger at the Apple of Gods eye : though they know, what one word (Aha) cost ; yet they will break through all natural, civil , and moral obligations to ruine Gods people : The Holy Ghost calls them *implacable men, fierce and headstrong* : they are like the *hot Oven* for fury, like the *Sea* for *boundless rage* : yet who hath believed this Scripture Report ?

2 Tim. 3. 3.

Evidences thereof.

Did we believe what Enemies all wicked men are unto all Saints, "We should not
 "lean to our own prudence and discretion to
 "secure us from any danger by these men :
 "we would get an Ark to secure us from the
 "deluge of their wrath : If at any time we
 "be cast among them and delivered, we
 "would bless God with the three Children,
 "that the hot fiery Oven did not consume
 "us : we would not wonder, when we hear
 "of any of their barbarous cruelty ; but rather
 "wonder at Gods restraining them every
 "day : we would be suspicious of receiving hurt,
 "when cast among light and frothy
 "Companions : we would shun their company,
 "as we do Lyons and Scorpions : we
 "would never commit any trust or secret
 "to their hands : we would not be light
 "hearted, whilst in their Society : we would
 "not rely on their promises any more than
 "we would on the promise of the Devil,
 "their Father : we would long for Heaven
 "to be delivered from the tents of Kedar :

"we

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"we would not count any of the Saints secu-
"red from danger, though related to any
"great wicked man: we would not twist our
"selves with them by matching our selves or
"Children to these Sons and Daughters of
"Belial: neither would we make choice of
"Devils to be our Servants.

How few do believe what a quarrel God hath
with wicked men? And that not only with the
loose; but the formal and hypocritical also?
If we did, we would tremble as much to be
among them, as to be in an house, that is
falling: we would endeavour to *save* our
selves from this untoward generation. The
Apostle would not so have adjured them, so
charged, so intreated them, had he not known
the danger of wicked company. *God is an-
gy with the wicked every day; his bow is bent,
his arrows are on the strings*, the instruments
for their ruine are all prepared. And is it
safe to be there where the Arrows of God
are ready to fly about our ears? How was the
Apostle afraid to be in the Bath with Ce-
rinthians? *Depart* (saith God by Moses) *from*
the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, lest
you be consumed in all their sins. How have
the baskets of good figs suffered with the bad!
Is it not prejudicial to the gold to lye with
the dross? Lot had been ruined by his Neigh-
bourhood to the Sodomites, if God had not
wrought wonderfully for his deliverance.
Will you put God to work miracles to save
you from your ungodly company? It is dan-
gerous being in the road with thieves, whilst

From not
believing
Gods
quarrel
with them?
Acts 2. 40.

Psal. 7. 11.

Numb. 16.
26.

Prov. 13.
10.

Gods *bue* and cry of Vengeance is at their backs. *A Companion of fools shall be destroyed.* The very beasts may instruct you to consult better for your security, the very Deer are afraid of a wounded chased Deer, and therefore for their preservation thrust him out of their company.

From not believing that they have suffered from them.

Eph. 2. 2.

How few believe their own experiences, what they have suffered by the company of the Ungodly? It had been better we had gone to the Pest-house, and eat and drank with persons infected with the Plague, even whilst the soar and botch was running on them, than to accompany with wicked men: our bodies would have been endangered only by the one; but our Souls are by the other. Is not the poison of Asps under their tongues? Doth not the Devil act them? Doth he not work effectually in the Children of disobedience? Doth he not inform them? Is there any breath, that is not infectious, coming from their lips? How soon could Joseph rap out an Oath by living with Pharaohs Courtiers? It was not long time, that Peter was (unnecessarily, without a Call) in the High-Priests Hall, and how quickly do we hear him Curse and Swear, and deny his Lord and Master? We are insensibly ensnared, and defiled, by wicked men, as we are black'd and discoloured by lying long under the hot and scorching Sun beams. Do not we yet know and feel how a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump, and that one sinner destroys much good, and that those that were mingled among the

Heathen,

Hastben, learned their ways? Have not you found after such company-keeping, how your hearts have been dead, dull, straitned, loth and unwilling to come into Gods presence? *It is difficult* (saith a late ingenious Writer) *even to a miracle to keep Gods Commandments, and evil company too.* How suddenly after your Soul-refreshments in your Closet-Communion have you lost all your heats, and spiritual fervencies, which you had in secret, and have instantly cooled by going forth into cold and corrupt air? When a Saint hath been in private ravished with the love of God, and the joyes of Heaven, and afterwards meets with company, which neither doth, nor can speak one word of such matters, what a damp is it to him? What a quenching (as it were) of the Spirit of God in him? Nay is not that true which one saith, that *the people of God do generally lose more by worldly men (that are of a blameless conversation before men) than they lose by wicked and profane men?* O! how oft hath communion with carnal men been at least an occasion of blotting your evidences? and of your suspecting the truth of your own graces, whilst you have omitted the duties of admonition and reproof, when there was a call thereto? O! how oft have you said, *If I cannot suffer such a mans frowns and displeasure, and therefore have omitted my duty to their Souls, and durst not appear for God against their sins, how shall I deny my self in greater matters? How shall I suffer at a stake for Christ? How shall I resist*

to blood, fighting against sin? You hold the Wolf by the Ear, whilst among them: If you reprove them, you get a blot; if not, you fear, you are too cowardly to be inrolled among the Saints, I will acquaint you with an Observation of mine: *When I have seen a Christian fall into an intimacy with vain and erroneous company, I have counted it a mark of a back sliding heart, and have found it so too too oft: And no wonder; for we our selves count it a disgrace to us to accompany with them, who associate with people suspected for uncleanness and dishonesty, and so doth the Spirit of God, who will not partake in the scandal of such Association: Verily, He will not be a Partner with you, when you are not choice of your Fellowship.*

From not
confide-
ring, how
hereby
they har-
den them
in their
wicked-
ness.

How few consider, how they harden wicked men, by an intimacy with them, Whereas withdrawalment from them, might be a means to make them ashamed? Whilst we are merry and jovial with them, we make them believe their condition is not deplorable, their danger is not great; whereas, if we shunned them, as we would a Bowed-Wall, whilst they remain enemies to the Lord, this might do them good, for the startling of them, and rousing of them, out of their unhappy security, and strong delusions, wherein they are held.

Not dis-
charging
Duty in
their com-
pany.

Secondly, May not neglect of discharging the Duties owed to wicked men, whilst in their company, be also justly charged upon Church-Members?

The
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Members? Professors carelessness of the perishing condition of the Souls even of the vilest, is a sin much to be lamented. It is an *Iron Age* we live in, and mens hearts are strangely hardned, as to any pity they shew to the multitudes, who are in a natural and damnable condition. Me-thinks you should reflect on the misery of an unconverted state, whilst you your selves were so lately in it.

Are not you convinced, that those with whom you converse daily, have reasonable, immortal Souls, capable of eternal life or misery? Have not they the same common Nature with you? Are there not (at least) many civil bonds, wherein you stand related to them? Doth not their *misery* call aloud for your *compassions*? Are they not *in the gall of bitterness, and bonds of iniquity*? Have they yet any part or fellowship in the pardon of their Sins? The endeavouring to heal the back-slidings of Christians, though a very necessary work, is not so necessary (for they will surely be pardoned and healed, they are not in such hazard of damnation) as to endeavour *to open the eyes* of these poor blind wretches, and *to turn them from the power of Satan unto God*. Would you not make more haste to cure a man, that is taken with a swooning fit, than one that hath a little swelling in his finger? I wonder you are no more affected with the miseries that attend your Unregenerate Friends and Acquaintance, who must suddenly be Converted, or Damned: Me-thinks you should pity them

Several weighty Considerations, to persuade Professors to be treating with Souls about their eternal Estate, whatever company they are in.

the more; because they pity not themselves. He thinks the value that Christ hath put upon Souls, by bleeding for them, the ransom that he hath given for miserable man, and the unwearied pains he takes for the redemption of fallen man, should teach us to open our lips, to give some directions and counsels to them, who are within a stride of Hell, but a breath between them and eternal ruine: And yet how are Gods people straitened towards these forlorn and miserable, undone, condemned Creatures? Though they are under the curse of the Law, though the sentence of death be past against them, and is ready to be executed every moment; yet you exhort them not to *flye from wrath to come*: If they will perish, they may perish, for any spiritual contribution that you will afford them. It grieves me sometimes, to see how Gods people eat up their own and others time, with vain, frothy and unfavoury words: When they should be speaking some rouzing, startling words of Hell and Damnation, of the necessity of Regeneration, of Eternity, of the foolish choice men make in preferring *the pleasures of sin, which are but for a season*, before eternal joyes; of the deceits of the heart, of the cheats of the Devil, of the malignity of sin, of the curse of the Law, &c. they are talking of this fashion, or of that, they are perhaps censuring one another, but endeavouring nothing for the undeceiving their deluded Companions. You cannot but know what advantages

you

have by your intimacies with them, to
ever that to them, which they will receive
from you, when Satan perhaps hath imbit-
ted them against their Ministers, so that
Pulpit-counsels and reproofs are lost up-
on them. Besides, You are in private with
them, and you know by your selves, how
backward you were, to apply the
truths of God to your own Souls, but you,
as Nathan to *Dauld*, may go and say, *Thou
art the Man, thou the Woman*: You may hear
their pleas for themselves, and so have an
opportunity to confute them; whereas they
were reserved to their Ministers, though they
have been friendly, earnestly and frequently
invited to a Christian conference: And yet
how do you neglect all these Opportunities
of serving the Necessities of your Friends:
You pretend love unto them; but how can
ye see the blind before your eyes tumbling
into the Lake of Hell, and yet not call on
them to return and live? It is admirable,
that you should think you have the Divine
Nature within you, and yet be void of com-
passions to these miserable Objects, who lye
wounded before you, where-ever you go
or come. O! Me-thinks, when you enter
the house of an Unregenerate, you should
thus meditate, *Now have I an opportunity to
save a Soul from Hell, to have a greater con-
quest than Cæsar or Alexander could boast of:
Now may I shew my self a Friend of God, by
pleading his right to the Creature: Now may
I have an occasion to make all the Angels of
Heaven*

Heaven laugh and sing, and all the cursed Devils to roar, by saving a lost Soul.

And will you see these wounded in your way, and pass them by with an unmerciful Spirit? If you see your Brother have need of outward things, (much more if needing Grace, the Image of, and Peace with, God) and you shut up your bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the Love of God in you? You have some pity left, when you see a man fallen under his horse, or struggling for life upon the waters, or in an house fired; your bowells are turned within you; But alas! here are they that are dropping into the Lake of Fire every moment, that are dragged up and down, from one Lust to another, by the Devil, (a sorer bondage by far) and yet you do not pity them. O! Pity them, pity them; Go over to Macedonia, and help them. It is a grief to my Soul, to consider, how dull, how useless Christians are, in the Towns and Villages, where Providence hath cast them: If they meet with a man, they will not so much as ask, whether he be bound for Heaven, or Hell? whether he knows the necessity of the new Birth, yea or no? whether he hath left Sin, as his greatest burden, whether he be willing of Christ, and Salvation by him, upon his own terms? Nay, Professors will not so much as counsel them to read a good Book, or lend them one, if they are poor and unable to buy: they will be at no cost to save a Soul, that is really of more worth, than a World. How

that you account your selves Christi-
 an, whilst you have no higher esteems of
 Sin? Or how can you have any assurance,
 that you hate Sin, whilst you labour not the
 removal of it, in whomsoever you find it?
 you see men trifling away their time, why
 do you not put them upon redeeming their
 time? If you find them lovers of pleasures,
 why do you not invite them, and press them,
 to look after cordial joy and mirth, and the
 true pleasures, that are at Gods right hand?
 If you are the Subjects of Christ, how can
 you endure Treason against him, and not
 suppress it? I'll never believe, that man
 ever mourned for sins of his own, that doth
 not for sins of others; or that he ever hated
 sin in himself, that doth not endeavour to
 raine it in others Souls, as well as in his
 own. Be ashamed at your pretensions, as
 if you had hearts of flesh, when you have
 hearts of stones, the hearts of Tygers, the
 hearts of Infidels, or else you would pity
 the miserable unconverted Souls. And what,
 if they desire not your help, the more need
 you have to pity them: the less awakened
 they are out of their cursed security, the
 more miserable and dangerous is their state.
 O! Put on the bowells of Jesus Christ: car-
 ry not your selves in an high, proud way,
 in a lofty, magisterial way, towards these
 poor Souls: Do not think thou hast dis-
 charged duty towards them, by running into
 a corner, and backbiting them for blindness,
 hardness, contempt of Christ, &c. but ra-
 ther

ther help them to some of your eye-salve
 that they may see. Consider you have Tal-
 lents, and account you must for them, and
 bethink your selves, whether you may not
 give a better account, by endeavouring to
 reduce these poor Souls, that are straying to
 Hell, than by letting them alone to damn
 themselves: Consider sadly what answer you
 will make, when Christ shall arise and plead
 with you, when Christ shall say, *Where is
 thy Brother?* Will *Cain's* answer serve? *Am
 I my Brothers keeper?* Will not Christ reply
 on you? "Did not I come from Heaven
 "on purpose to redeem these perisht Souls?
 "Did not I charge you to *exhort one another
 "daily? to do good to all?* Did not I furnish
 "you with wisdom and experience, that
 "you might be able and ready to help
 "others? Did not I by wonders of Provi-
 "dence prolong your dayes, that you might
 "be useful? Did not I give you an interest in
 "the affections of your Neighbours, that
 "you might be *as the Dew, and as the Rivers
 "of Waters to the parched ground?* that you
 "might be the *Light and Salt of the Earth?*
 "Nay, did not I remove the Ministry, (a-
 "mong other weighty grounds) to try your
 "affections to perishing Souls? And is this
 "your answering all my designs and expecta-
 "tions, to rail at them, as the ungodly per-
 "ty, and not to endeavour to make them
 "better? O! Consider how sad your case
 will be, if the blood of thousands of Souls
 shall be laid at your doors, for your neg-

sinners. *th*, for your carelessness, for your being
eye-salve more than *Balaams Ass*, for he once repro-
have T perhaps you have never. How do you
them, an now, but a few words of yours might be as
may m valuable as *Jonah's* to *Nineveh*, as the *Sa-*
uring t *Carthagenian* woman's was to the City? Is this
raying t to love thy Neighbour as thy self? Dost
to dam love thy self, and not regard thy Soul?
swer you And canst thou love thy Neighbour, and
nd plea not endeavour to save him from perishing?
Where i to pull the brand out of the fire? Have you
ve? An learned Christ? When our Lord dwelt in
ist reply flesh among us, was he dumb before sinners,
Heaven as you are, when he saw the multitude want-
Souls ing bread, did not he deal forth the bread
is anothe of life to them? did not he prefer this work
I furni before his meat and drink? had not he com-
e, that passion for the ignorant? did not he enlighten
to help poor ignorant Souls? and reprove the Hy-
f Provi pocritical of others? When he went into the
a might Publicans houses, did not he preach of the
terest in Kingdom of God unto them? And hath not
, that he given you an example, that you should do
e River as he hath done? Should not you make it a
at you matter of Conscience to write after so great,
Earth so safe, so glorious a Copy? to follow so
try, (a worthy a Leader and Pattern? Add withal,
ry your what stumbling blocks you have laid in the
is this wayes of sinners? how many have been of-
pecta- fended by your conversation? And will you
ly par- send so many hundreds to Hell, and not en-
them deavour the conversion of some? You pre-
ar case tend the want of parts: But alas! you want
Souls bowels, you want affections, you have not

a real fight, and deep sense of eternal matters: If you had, you would with tears your eyes beseech your Neighbours to mind their perishing Souls. Have not you so many parts as to say to your Neighbours, *Repent, and Pray, if perhaps your sins may be forgiven* Go into thy Closet, Professor, and there mourn over thy hard heartedness, and thy mercifulness to the Souls of thousands, whom thou mightst have been an instrument of Conversion, if thou hadst but attempted it. Or could you not have gone and beseeched your Ministers to lay to heart the perishing estate of such a man or woman? Or might you not have entreated those Souls to consult some Minister about their Everlasting State? You have not done what you could: you pretend you cannot convert them; but you will not, you will not try whether you can work them over from sin to God. You say they are dead in sins and trespasses, they have hearts of stone, as insensible as stones, as stupid, as blockish, as impenetrable as stones: And wast not thou so some years ago? Hast thou forgot *the rock, out of which thou wast hewn*? Nay, is there not too much stone in thy heart, that thou canst see thy God so dishonoured, Christ so reproached by those, who are baptized in his Name, and wear his Livery, and yet not endeavour to pull them out of the fire? Thou relievest thy self with the mercy thou shewest to the bodies of the poor, that beg at thy door, when thou seest their soars, their lean cheeks,

naked shoulders, thou succourest them;
 things thou oughtest to do; but not to
 the Spiritual Alms, that were due
 to them: thou shouldst have counselled
 them, admonished them, enlightned them;
 now if they perish in their ignorance,
 will not their blood be required at thy hands?
 tremble at your blood-guiltiness. The
 of Heaven and Earth, who lays his claim
 on Souls, *All Souls are mine*, hath charged
 thee, not to hate thy Brother in thine heart, not
 to suffer sin to rest upon him, but to reprove him:
 yet thou lettest him alone, to perish in
 his iniquity. You are so taken up with your
 own temporal or eternal good, that you lit-
 tle regard what becomes of others to all eter-
 nity. How do some hope to flink to Heaven
 alone? Perhaps they seek their own profit;
 not the profit of many, that they may be
 saved. O that men would cast their eyes
 broad (saith one) the very dumb inanimate
 creatures would teach them better; every
 creature assimilates, Fire turns what is near
 into Fire, Earth converts into Earth,
 flowers will be scattering of their seed and
 so on. How canst thou hope the blessing of
 the new Creation rests upon thee, when thou
 dost not increase and multiply? O that you
 would be prevailed with, to help, counsel
 and direct others to Heaven! If you have
 found the way thither, be pleased to shew
 others the way to life, the way to glory. O!
 pity them, as Christ pittied you: Christ
 hath led you out of the wilderness of sin and
 trouble

1 Cor. 10.
 33.

Mat. 8. 29.

trouble, Be you eyes to the blind, direct them the right way to the Land of Promise, tell them what course you took, declare unto them what God hath done for your souls. Do not you see how industrious Christs enemies are to diffuse their poyson? Do not the Turks and Papists endeavour to proselyte? Will they not compass Sea and Land to spread and diffuse their Leaven? Do not all people (besides you) labour to win to their Gods? Do unclean persons and drunkards entice others to the same wickedness? Shall Satans Vassals be filling Hell, and will you not labour to fill Heaven? Is it not your Honour to bring many Sons and Daughters unto God? What will become of the next Generation? How few Servants (if any) will Christ have, if others take no more pains, than you do, to convince, to allure, to convert? I fear Christ will take up the old complaint, *The Foxes have holes, and the Birds have Nests, but the Son of Man will not have where to lay his head.* Consider how oft your poor Ministers have beseeched you to enter on this work, lest other sins prove your damnation; and yet how hath a dumb Devil possessed you? O that you would commune with your own hearts, whether you are willing that thousands should perish, and go to Hell? and if they answer, No, Ask them a second question, why do not you use the means to prevent it? Namely, Exhortation, Reproof, and Counsel? You have covered over your want.

d, direct and tenderness with a pretence that you
 Promise have not the gifts of Ministers, you cannot
 declare to exhort as Ministers, &c. But have you not
 your souls been told that God can work by small means,
 as well as by great, and that by things that
 Do not are not God can confound the wisdom of
 profelyt the flesh, and bring to naught the things
 Land that are? Is not this like the pretence of not
 Do not being eloquent? Do you not know, have you
 to not heard, that the issue, and event depends
 sons on the blessing of the Lord, rather than on
 wicked the work it self? Is it not all one to the Lord,
 ng Hell to wound by a short, as by a long sword?
 en? Is Cannot God bless a few words in thy mouth,
 Sons as he did in Christs, and the Apostles? Canst
 become not thou say, *follow Christ*? and may not pre-
 vants (sently a *Matthew*, a Publican leave his sinful
 take courses and embrace the Christian faith?
 vince, to Canst thou not say, *Repent and Believe, that*
 I take up *your sins may be blotted out*? and may not God
 ve bul, concur with thee, as he did of old times?
 n of Ma Is the Lords hand shortened, that it cannot help?
 Confide If Israel be not gathered, yet thy reward is with
 beseech the Lord, if thine heart were upright, and
 er man could testifie that night and day thou hast not
 yet how ceased to warn, to rebuke, and counsel.
 e that ye Certainly your memories are not so bad, but
 n heart, you must remember the weight of sin, and
 thousand of the wrath of God: you have seen the
 if they wonders of the Lord in the deeps: you, that
 question have escaped to shoar, can tell of the Rocks
 eventful and Shelves, and Storms, which you have been
 d Coun delivered from; and will you let others Ship-
 want wreck their Souls, rather than hold out your
 light

light unto them, that they may avoid their ruines? What shall I say to humble you? There is more charity in Hell, than you can afford: Blush, blush, and be ashamed to have less zeal, love, and pity, to perishing Souls, than *Dives* in Hell had, he would have his Brethren saved from the Valley of *Hinnom*. Your silence will make others think that Hell is a tollerable place, that sin is not so evil and bitter a thing, that to lye under Gods wrath is not so great a misery, whilst you are so slow and backward, to warn your Friends and Acquaintance, that they flee from these, and take Sanctuary in the true City of Refuge, the Lord Jesus Christ. O! If you know the worth of a Soul, pity the multitude, with whom the day is not broke, whose forlorn Souls are under a continual Massacre from the bloody Butcher of Hell: Befree your Souls no longer with the guilt of their blood: Let them not starve for want of bread, whilst you have to give them. I shall bless God for ever and ever, if this your negligence of the Souls of those, whom you may account without, may be cordially bewailed, and you for the future double your diligence for their conversion. Ministers cannot convert without the Concourse of Omnipotency, neither can you. Though Satan and thy own lazy heart hath told thee, thou art unfit to set upon this work, yet better do it meanly, than wholly omit it. God (like Parents on earth) loves to see his Children busy at those duties, which are too hard for them.

and then he steps in and is a Co-worker with them. What God did by illiterate Fishermen, by *Priscilla*, he can do by thee. The Lord pardon thy former unmercifulness to the Souls of men ; But if thou continue careless and cruel, if thou wilt not by Prayers for them, and counsels to them, seek their redemption, as sure as thou art reading, the voice of thy Brothers blood is crying against thee from the earth. By your example before (if not since) Profession, you have been the cause of the destruction of Souls, of how many who can tell ? And, as *Jerobam made Israel to sin* many years after he was rotten in his grave, so your sin, your wicked examples may propagate the trade of sin from generation to generation, until Christ shall come to Judgement. Tremble, tremble at the thoughts of it, if thou hast not the heart of a Beast in thee. O ! how many souls are crying in Hell against thee, cursing the day they knew thee, or their Ancestors knew thee ; for that by thee they learned to sin the more, and were strengthened in their wickedness by thy tongue, and by thy life ? And now are not you bound to do your utmost to make restitution ? to labour to save them that be alive ? Is it not reasonable that you should labour to win Souls to Gods, as you have to the Devils service ? and to have many blessing God in the Heavens for you, that ever they were in the company of such an active zealous Christian, who by word and life was instrumental to bring them

to the knowledge of themselves, and of their God? And is it not a glorious work, to hold forth such Light to the World, that they seeing your good works, may glorify God, and you may be Propagators of Zeal and Holiness, from Generation to Generation, till Christ shall appear to judge the World, and to reward you for all the services you have done to his Name? O! how welcome shall that man be to Heaven and Christ, who hath fed the Souls, and clothed the Souls, and visited the Souls, which he hath purchased with his own precious blood? Christ will own thee for his Benefactor.



CHAP. XXXVII.

The Dis-ingenuity and Scandalousness of their Miscarriages.

The wickedness of the former miscarriages.
Ezek. 8. 9.
V. 6, 12,
p. 5.

WHen God had given the Prophet Ezekiel a large Catalogue of Judah's Abominations, he then shew'd him the *Wickedness* of their Abominations: *He said unto me, Go in, and Behold the wicked Abominations they do here.* He commanded him once, and again, and again, to turn him yet again, and he should see greater Abominations. I can-

not

not indeed promise thee, that thou shalt now see greater Abominations, than those already mentioned: All that I shall now do, shall be to represent the former Miscarriages in their crimson dye, and scarlet colour. And,

The First Thing I shall mention, as making your sins (Professors) out of measure sinful, is your Disingenuity in so sinning against God. O! You have sinned against a gracious God: You have grieved the good Spirit of God, whereby (some amongst you) have been sealed to the day of Redemption. I am bold to say, that one godly mans sinning against light and mercy, doth more break the heart of God, than the brutish Sins of a Pagan Kingdom. I am broken (saith God) with your whorish heart, which hath departed from me, &c. And ye shall loath your selves for your evils, which ye have committed in your abominations. God hath been pressed down with your sins, as the Cart with sheaves, till he hath even Creak'd under the weight. God expected more from the Trees planted in Zion, than from the wild ones in the Wilderness. Grief and Burthen springs much from unexpected Unkindnesses. I looked for Fruit, and there was none. How were David's and Saul's Sins aggravated from the merciful Dispensations of God to them? And Samuel said, When thou wast little in thine own fight, wast not thou made the Head of the Tribes of Israel, and the Lord annointed thee King over Israel, and the Lord sent thee on a journey, and

Committed against so good and kind a God.

Eph. 4. 30.

Ezek. 6. 9.

Amos 2. 13.

Luk. 13. 9.

1 Sam. 15. 17, 18, 19.

2 Sam. 12.
7, 8, 9.

Isa. 1. 3,
3, 4.

said, Go, and utterly destroy the Sinners, &c. Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord? And Nathan said to David, &c. Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I anointed thee King over Israel, and delivered thee out of the hand of Saul: And I gave thee thy Masters House, and thy Masters Wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the House of Israel, and of Judah, and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things. Wherefore hast thou despised the Commandment of the Lord, to do evil in his sight? And hath there not been as much dissingenuity and unkindness in our Sins? The Lord hath given his Statutes to us, and his Laws, He hath not so dealt with all the Nations under Heaven: He hath nourished and brought us up as Children; but we have rebelled against him. The Ox knoweth his Owner, and the Ass his Masters Crib: but Israel doth not know, my People (my People) doth not consider. Ah sinful Nation, a People laden with iniquity, &c. God fetcheth a deep sigh (Ah!) under the burden of this Ingratitude: His Spirit is laden and troubled with it. They have provoked the Holy One of Israel. Mis-improvements of Mercies are very provoking. When God comes for Bread, to be sent away with Stones, must need vex the good Spirit of the Lord. Hear, O Heavens, and give ear, O Earth; for the Lord hath spoken it. Oh for Professors to be worse than Publicans; for they will be kind to such as are kind to them! Have not

&c. we sinned against God, even with his fa-
vours, and requited him evil for good? May not the Lord say unto us? *Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? Is not he thy Father, that hath bought thee?* Deut. 32. 6.
All the mercies we have received, greaten our sins. The more richly that God hath heaped his Blessings upon us, the more wantonly we have followed the swinge of our own Lusts, and the more contemptuously spurned at his holy Commandments. We have great cause to be ashamed, for that all our sins have been sins against mercy, and therefore against the Principle and Law of Nature. It is a perpetual Spot, not to be worn out by time, that of King Joash, that he slew Zechariah, the Son of Jehojada, the High-Priest, who had been loyal unto him in the getting of the Kingdom, and faithful in the administration of it. Thus Joash the King remembred not the kindness which Je- 2 Chron. 24. 22, 23.
hoyada his Father had done to him, but slew his Son, and when he dyed, he said, the Lord look upon it, and requite it. And it came to pass, at the end of the year, that the Host of Syria came up against him: and they came to Judah and Jerusalem, and destroyed all the Princes of the people, from among the people. But alas! What Engagements could Zechariah possibly lay on Joash, that may weigh with the Mercies of our God to us? And yet how have we made his choicest Favours as Arrows, to shoot at the God that sent them? What wretched Predigals have we been, to

Ezra 9.

13, 14.

Micha 6.5.

wast all in the service of Hell, which were conferred with so open an hand, to draw forth our time, strength and spirits, in the praises and services of God? For this our ingratitude, *the Lord may justly be angry with us, till he hath consumed us, so that there shall be no remnant, nor escaping.* O that you would remember the Lord from Shittim to Gilgal, i. e. from the beginning of Mercy, to the end of it! And you will hardly find, that you (any of you) have been the better for it: but many, *Jeshurun-like, have waxed-fat, and kicked.* God is this day calling out of Heaven to England, and to each particular person in it, *Do you thus requite the Lord, O foolish people, and unwise?* I could even wish, for the thousands of our Israel, that they had received fewer Privileges, or had had the grace to serve the Lord in the abundance of all things, better than they have to this very day. If ever you purpose sound Repentance, then take a view of all the Mercies of God towards you: Go back to the time, when the first stone was laid; yea go back to the eternal projects of God, to make thee out of nothing, and to redeem thee, when worse than nothing: Review the upper and lower Springs, with which Soul and Body have been refreshed: Remember how many eminent Deliverances and Salvations God hath wrought for thee: And if at any time thou hast been straitned in outward comforts, yet remember how thou hast been enlarged with spiritual graces;

God hath denied thee in one kind of mercy, he hath supplied it by a gracious wonderful commutation in another in a better : if thou hast been denied *the flesh pots of Egypt,* and *the land flowing with honey,* yet it hath been all made up in *the bread* (the Mannah) *that fell from Heaven* : If thou hast had sometimes bodily infirmities, yet thou hast been *strengthened with all might in the inward man* : if thou hast been denied thee the *gold* of the earth, yet God hath supplied thee in making thee *rich in faith* : If sometimes Friends have been unfriendly, inconstant, or treacherous; yet *God hath stood by thee, when all left thee.* God hath dealt with you, as with *Sons* : your *gleanings* are better than the *Vintage* of the world. Having laid these, and innumerable such mercies in *one Scale*, now lay in the *other Scale* thy soul ingratitude, not only that particular sin of unthankfulness, that thou hast been guilty of (of which before) but the ingratitude that hath been in all thy sins, in thy pride, hypocrisy, formality, self-love, self-seeking, impatience, neglect of duty to Superiours, Equals, and Inferiours, profaneness, intemperance, unrighteousness, &c. that *Remembring the Lord and his goodness towards thee*, together with thy cursed returns, *thou mayest yet abhor thy self in dust and ashes.* Take words, and say, "My Salvations are more than I can number, "Blessed be God, the Father of all mercy : "But my sins also are innumerable, I cannot "recount them, shame upon me, O ! how
"vile

Mat. 5. 47.
Isa. 1. 3.

Judges 2.
1, 2, 3, 4.

Very scandalously.

"vile have I made my self, whilst by abominations
"of rich mercy, I have lived below the measure
"genuity that is found in *Publicans* and
"Beasts? O that God would give me the success,
cess, that the Angel had on such a sinful
people as you are! And the Angel of the
Lord come up from *Gilgal* to *Bochim*, and
said I made you to go up out of *Egypt*, and
have brought you into the land, which I swore
unto your Fathers, and I said I will never break
my covenant with you, and ye shall make no
league with the Inhabitants of this land, &c.
but ye have not obeyed my voice, why have ye
done this, &c. And it came to pass, when the
Angel of the Lord spake these words to all the
Children of *Israel*, that the people lift up their
voice, and wept.

Secondly, The scandalousness of your mis-
riages is another aggravation of them. Had
all the forementioned abominations been
committed in Desarts and Holes of the earth,
where none had been privy to your irregu-
larities, you had had no sin in comparison of
what you (now) stand justly charged with.
If you had been only rotten hearted, that
would not have been under the eye and cen-
sure of the World: Religion would have had
no blemish, no loss, no considerable loss
thereby: But men have looked to your hands
and feet (whilst God to your hearts) and find-
ing so many defilements on you, hereby the
Name of God hath been blasphemed, God
is spoken evil of, whilst you have done evil
before men. You knew the world was an

ob-

by abusing the world, greedy to espy all the Er-
 rors of your lives : you knew spots in Cam-
 bric would sooner be marked, than in
 coarse cloth : you knew how apt the world
 was to condemn all Saints for the miscarria-
 ges of a few pretenders to Christianity : you
 knew how the world lay in wait, like the
 Arabian for his prey, waiting for somewhat
 to calumniate Christ and his followers with :
 you knew the tongues, that are set on fire of
 Hell, would bech out their enmity upon
 the sight of your sins : you knew how apt
 they were to be prejudiced against you, and
 (as the people in *Elies* dayes, from the mis-
 carriages of them, that pretended to draw
 near to God) would by your occasion ab-
 hor the Offerings of the Lord. You should
 have walked with such a good Conscience,
 that, *whereas the world would speak against*
you as evil-doers, they might be ashamed : But
 instead of this you have opened the mouth of
 Blasphemy : you have gratified the Devil
 exceedingly : were he capable of joy, you
 have furthered it, by being contented to be
 winnowed by him, and to be led captive at his
 will : The scandals of men reputed for holi-
 nesis have been his greatest Harvests, his
 greatest advantages : He hopes by the falls
 of Cedars to break down and crush the Shrubs
 and tender plants, that grow nigh. God
 alone knows what mischief you have done to
 Religion already, and where the mischief
 will end. *Jeroboam made Israel to sin, many*
years after his death. Whereas ye should
 have

1 Sam. 2.
 17.
 1 Pet. 3.
 16.
 2 Sam. 12.
 14.
 2 Tim. 2.
 26.

have left a precious Name behind you, holy exact copies of Righteousness for succeeding generations to write after, you have laid the stumbling block of your iniquity before the faces of hundreds and thousands, to cause them to fall. Give over wondering that for these last ten years the Gospel hath had a miscarrying Womb and dry Breasts, know, you have, like the Serpent, the Dragon, stood as in the place of bearing, you have hindred the Birth, or devoured the Child as soon as born: you have been of the old generation of Gods Curse, *you would not be Heaven your selves, and hindred others, that would, if you had not laid your offences in their way.* Perhaps some of you may think to relieve your selves, that you know none are taken in these *Gins and Traps*: you will know shortly that he that tempteth to evil commits an hainous sin, though his temptation prove not effectual. God will not reward men altogether by the event of scandals; but by the tendency of Scandal in its own nature: Others not sinning after your example will not excuse and lessen your faults, which were so apt to lead them in'o sin. *Wo* (saith Christ) *to him, by whom the offence comes.* Wo to them that take offence; but greater wo to them, that give it. If God threatned *Eli* to take him up by the roots, for not punishing Scandals in his Sons; because his Sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not. What dreadfull judgments are we exposed to, who are the offence-

Luke 11.
52.

Marth. 18.
37.

1 Sam. 3.
13.

pence-givers? Wonder not if having caused
 many to stumble at the Law, that God
 will make us contemptible and base before all
 the people. Ye are departed out of the way: Mal. 2. 8, 9.
 ye have caused many to stumble at the Law,
 ye have corrupted the Covenant of Levi,
 with the Lord of Hosts: therefore have
 I also made you contemptible and base be-
 fore all the people. How oft have we been
 as unsavoury Salt? and is it any wonder
 if we be cast out, and thrown to the Dung-hil? Mat. 5. 13.
 O that you would remember David, take
 him into your Closet with you, he was scan-
 dalous in the matter of Uriah and Bathsheba:
 it is true, he repented in dust and ashes, he
 abhorred himself, made his bed to swim, the
 sin was pardoned, the guilt thereof removed,
 a solemn absolution was sent him by a Pro-
 phet, and how did God follow him with
 misery upon misery? He might in the death
 of the Child, in the defilement of his Daugh-
 ter, in the murder of Amnon, and in the
 treason of Absolon, in his weeping and going
 barefoot, in his Concubines being defiled,
 and his own Crown and Life jeoparded, in
 all these things he might see the woful fruits
 of Scandal. Wherefore hast thou despised the
 Commandment of the Lord, to do evil in his
 sight? Thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with
 the Sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy
 Wife, and hast slain him with the Sword of the
 Children of Ammon. Now therefore the
 Sword shall never depart from thine House, &c.
 Behold, I will raise up evil against thee, out
 of

2 Sam. 12.
 9, 10, 11,
 12, 13, 14.

of thine own House, and I will take thy Wife before thine eyes, and give them unto thy Neighbour, and he shall lye with thy Wife in the sight of the Sun. For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the Sun. And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said unto David, The Lord also hath put away thy sin, thou shalt not dye. Howbeit because by this deed thou hast given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the Child also that is born unto thee, shall surely dye. David, repenting of his Scandals, be thou punished, what will become of you, who have made Religion to be abhorred? and yet are insensible, unbroken and unhumbled to this very day? Well may (unrepented of) Scandals lye in your bones many dayes hence, seeing David's did, yea he roared because of his sin: Well may you go drooping to your graves, being bereft of all joy, and comfortable looks from Heaven, whilst repenting David lost so long the joy of Gods salvation. What shall I say? O all ye, who have lost your Virgin affections to Christ, who have gone a whoring from your God, who are covetous to a wonder, and over-run with caring cares, and sinful despondencies, who break out daily into scandalous passions, who by divisions, envies, animosities, over-reachings, perjuries, and hypocrisie, have made Religion vile! Know from Christ's mouth, it had been better for you, that a Millstone had been hanged about your neck,

Psal. 51. 8.

Psal. 38. 8.

Psal. 51.

12.

Mat. 18. 6.

and that you had been drowned long ago in the depth of the Sea, than to live so offensively towards men, as you have done; because hereby the Name of God is polluted. It had been better you had never known the wayes of God, than after Profession and Knowledge to depart, and to be as Dogs and Swine. If you had never professed Gods Name, you had never polluted it; but God will reckon with you about it. I am bold to say, that a Drunkard, Adulterer, Robber, &c. doth not so provoke the Lord to wrath, as a Professor may, even by an impatient, discontented word: and for this compare two Scriptures: In the former there is unbelief, and quarrelling with God (face to face, as it were) and yet God passed that by, it being in secret, with a short check, *Is the Lords hand waxed short?* But in the other place, *Because ye believed not, &c. to sanctifie me in the eyes of the Children of Israel, &c. therefore ye shall dye in the Wilderneck, and never set foot on the Land of Promise.* One scandalous Professor doth more hurt, and more stain Religion, than hundreds of Drunkards: and therefore their Hell shall be the standard to that, of all other sinners. *Appoint him his portion with Hypocrites.* Thousands in Hell will curse the day, wherein they saw your looseness on Earth; for thereby they have blasphemed Christ, as a Friend of Publicans and Sinners, and as if he countenanced you (secretly) in your Lusts, though (for date and form) he hath spoken great things against

Jer. 34. 16.

1 Pet. 2. 20, 21.

Numb. 11. 21, 22.
with Num. 20. 10. and Deut. 32. 51.

Atrocious
sub nomine
Christi Pro-
fessione pec-
cat. Sal-
vian. Mat. 24.
51.

Rom. 2.
23, 24.

Gal. 2. 14.

against such courses in his Word. O! how frequently have *you made boasts of God, and the Law; but by breaking of it, ye have caused his Name to be evil spoken of.* When you should have been leading others to Heaven, you have by your example lead them to Hell. How deep shall their Hell be, who are plunged thither with their own, and other mens sins also? Though God should give you repentance and pardons; yet how oft will your souls bleed to consider, how many you have compelled by your example to sin and blaspheme, who are actually in the chains of darkness, or hastning thither in a full career? O that you would no longer be like the body of *Amasa*, to cause others to stand still, or go back from the wayes of Holiness! O thou scandalous Professor! What account must thou pass with God shortly, before (perhaps) thou hast turned thine eye to the next page? Will not the blood of multitudes, who perish by thy means, be required at thy hands? One sin may become many millions of offences, as the Numbers may be that shall hear of it. No wonder that men are emboldned to sin, that the Adulterer cares not for the Curtains of the Night, nor the Drunkard for the shadows of the Evening, no wonder that the Swearer can spit the Name of God so impudently out of his mouth: these have been encouraged by thy revolts, backslidings, careles, and seldom duties, and violent earthly seekings. O! if you would consider, you

how the Ark of the Lord; you were entrusted with his honour, but you have let it fall, and cast it in the dirt. O! tremble at what the God of Heaven hath made a standing decree upon this occasion, *them that honour I will honour, and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed.* And though it somewhat comforts me, that God will wipe off whatsoever can be cast on him; yet know to your sorrow, you shall not so easily discharge your selves of the Plagues, that are ready to be powred out upon you. God expected that you should have been *Kings and Priests to him*: you should have been *burning and shining lights*; you should have been like *lamps*, which have their *Signs on both sides*: you were of the *Kings guard*, you should have had *the Arms of the Crown* on your *Breasts*, and on your *Backs*, so that if any had viewed you, had met you, or had followed you, they might have known you for Gods Servants, by the stamp and cognizance of Heaven upon you: But you have rather been like those *Pictures*, that if you look on one side, you may see *an Angels face*, but on the other *the Devils*. O my Soul! how canst thou write of these, speak or think on them without weeping? O Reader! retreat, retreat quickly to thy Chamber, and spend some considerable time to reflect on thy scandalous Words and Actions, and how much the Name of God hath thereby been blasphemed, and thousands endangered to stumble and fall through thy occasion. How

1 Sam. 2:

30.

Rev. 1. 6.

Joh. 3. 35.

Jude v. 12.

many, that should have been as *Shields* to ward off these blows of reproach, that would fall on God and Religion, have proved *Swords* in the hands of the wicked, wherewith the Name of God is wounded, and whereby multitudes are in danger of perishing: yea, and the poor real Christians are even ashamed to look up, and to shew their faces, and profession to the world; because there have been such *Spots* in their communion: such unclean, scabbed, and unfavoury Sheep, that have walked among them.



CHAP. XXXVIII.

Their sinning against Knowledge, and impenitently, notwithstanding all means to bring them to Repentance for their Sins.

Against
much
light.

3ly. **Y**our Sins are yet further accented by being committed not only against such means of Knowledge, but against much Knowledge got thereby. You have had the most powerful Ministry under the whole Heavens: And believe it Sirs, if you had not heard him that spake from Heaven to you, Christ had not come, you had had no sin (comparatively) But now you have no Cloak for your sin. You have sinned against more light than the rest of the World. You know that

covetousness is a sin, and that for the iniqui-
 ty thereof God hath been wrath; and yet you
 seek great things for your selves still: you
 know that you are to speak evil of no man;
 and yet you bespatter every man, almost, to
 set off your selves by staining and blotting of
 others reputations: you know God abhors
 them, that, for a day only, hang down their
 heads, like bull-rushes; and yet this hath
 been your manner from the beginning of
 your Profession: you know your Masters will,
 you know you should not make mirth when the
 Lord is angry; and yet you dare, even then
 be vain and frothy: you know the Lord is
 much grieved at the backslidings of his peo-
 ple; and yet you have lost your antient faith,
 love, tenderness, zeal, publick-spirited-
 ness, and communion with God: yea you
 have not only known these to be sins, but
 you have spoken against them, as evils: you
 have told men how hainous a thing it is to
 sin against the Lord, and yet you your selves
 have added iniquity unto iniquity: What cloak
 have you for your sins.

Isa. 57.17.

Isa. 45. 5.

Tit. 3. 2.

Isa. 58. 5.

Luk. 12. 47.

Ezek. 21

10.

Fourthly, You have sinned impenitently,
 notwithstanding all means for your repentance
 and redreiment, which God hath most won-
 derfully vouchsafed you. The Lord hath for
 many years striven with you to put a stop to
 your sins, and to reclaim you from your
 miscarriages: Sometimes God hath gone up
 to Mount Ebal, and threatned you with
 Sword, Famine, Fire, and Pestilence, and
 yet you have refused to hear from thence:

And very
impeni-
tently.

- he hath leapt up to *Mount Gerazim*, and allured you by all kind of blessings; and yet you have carried your selves stoutly and impudently towards all the offers and tenders of grace for your recovery. *God would have healed you*: he hath said, *wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, my Father, thou art the guide of my youth, turn thou unto me; yet you returned not.* You have had many of the Lords faithful Ambassadors, who have laid siege at your hearts, to engage them to the Lord, and to take you off from your sinful wayes; but alas! all the glad tidings of mercy have not affected you, have not won you: all the Ordinances of *Jehovah* have found little place in you, have left no impression upon your Souls: *You have justified Judah and Samaria in all their stubbornness and rebellion against the Lord.* How righteous is it with the Lord to call upon the Ministers, *Let them alone*, threaten them no more, promise them no more. *Let him that is filthy be filthy still*; you have broken through Armies of Ordinances to commit sin; therefore Gospel and Gospel-Ministers let them alone: judgements overtake them, my plagues, my curses seize upon them, *Let them suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy, because they have hardened their necks, though often reprov'd.* God hath waited more than three and three years on you, expecting fruit; but he sees little save the Clusters of *Sodom* upon you: he hath borne with you so long, he hath beld his tongue, and
- Jer. 3.4.7.
- Ezek. 16.
51.
- Hos. 4. 17.
- Rev. 22. 11.
- Prov. 29. 1.

and said nothing (so long) that you have wickedly) thought God to be such an one as
 So that God must needs be a swift wit-
 ness against you for the vindicating of his
 great and glorious Name , unless you speedi-
 ly repent , and seek the Lord , if perhaps he
 be found . O ! how long hath God com-
 manded you every where to repent ; not only by
 threats , but by his judgements , which
 are begun at the House of God : What
 calls have we had ? Turn to the Lord
 with weeping : Let your laughter be turned into
 mourning : Humble your selves under the mighty
 hand of God ; and yet how stupid , how
 insensible , how impenitent have you re-
 mained to this very day , though you have
 seen the Arrows of the Lord flying amongst
 you ; yea though you have been told , If you
 repent , it shall repent the Lord of the evil he
 had thought , either to continue upon you ,
 or to bring down on you : yet alas ! where
 are the stirrings of your affections , the
 soundings of your bowels , the meltings and
 smartings of your repenting hearts ? O what
 insensible breasts , and hearts of Adamant have
 you ?

Psal. 50. 21.

Zeph. 2. 3.

Joel 2. 11.

1 Pet. 5. 6.

Jer. 18. 8.

How few are there mourning for all the
 wrongs they have done to the Majesty of God ?
 How few are there mourning for all the abuses
 offered to the grace of God ?
 How few are there mourning for the fear of Hell (and so indeed self-
 love) hath humbled some Ababs , and made
 them crouch , because they would not be
 humble ; But how few are humbled for
 the abuse of the love and grace of God by

Evidenced
 in their
 being in-
 sensible of
 their own
 sins.

Ezek. 3.8.

Job 23.16.

Psal. 42.3.

Know (Reader) that the Authors Pen had proceeded thus far, before he heard of the late dreadful Burning of London: the following lines shew thee what Impressions it made on his thoughts, and should on thy Soul.

their great offences? What the Lord complains of by the Prophet Ezekiel, of the *benighted* of Israel, that they *would not hearken to the Messengers he sent them; but were impudent and hard hearted*; may be again renewed against England, and all its dominions: the heart of stone is not yet taken away, where is the man, almost, that can say, *God hath made my heart soft*? Though you have born arms against God; though you have sinned against the Lord with an high hand: though upon self-tryal you may find those very sins amongst you, which brought Fire and Brimstone on Sodom and Gamorrah, and desolation on Israel; yet alas! when were *tears thy drink*? When didst thou make *thy Bed to swim*? Is thy beauty gone away for trouble? Dost thou abhorst thyself in dust and ashes before the Lord? Perhaps in Rama there is a voice heard, *Lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning*: Rachel weeping for her children, that dye by the Sword, or Pestilence, or are burnt in their beds: Perhaps in London, and throughout the Land, there are some tears shed for the Goals of fire that God hath scattered (the last week) over that famous and antient City; But how few are mourning for their pride, worldliness, contempt of the Ministers, and Apostasies, which God seems to be contending with only by the Sword, and the Pestilence, but by Fire with us? Where are the Doctors

of the Valleys? all of them mourning, every one
for his iniquity? A Pharaoh may so far re-
pent, as to say, *Take away the Plague*; but few
cry out, *Take away iniquity*: Few detest
their sins, few loath them, few are so bur-
thened with them, as that they desire heartily
to have them *taken away*. Possibly Sin in its
effects, in its sad consequences (as it confines
men to the Pesthouse, as it endangereth health
and life, as it is the founder of graves
and hells, as it burns up your houses and
goods) is some way burthensome, but few
are troubled with it, as it grieves, resisteth,
and quencheth the Spirit of God, and it is a
piece of the highest ingratitude, and as it
sticks against the breasts of mercy: And there-
fore no wonder if *Few are to be found mourning*
for other mens sins.

Ezek. 16. 2.

7. 16.

Hof. 14. 2.

Though *Jesus Christ* be crucified afresh,
and put to open shame: though the blessed Spi-
rit of our God be alwayes vexed and resisted:
though there be so much Atheism, Epicu-
rism, contempt of God, and his Ambassa-
dours and Gospel, Blasphemy, Violence,
Falthood, Pride, Adultery, Sodomy:
though there be setting up the posts of men,
with an apparent contempt of Gods holy in-
dications: though all the sins, for which
God cast out the Heathen, and cast off his Is-
rael be found amongst us, and these highly
aggravated, and innumerable circumstances;
yet how little are we concerned therein?
How seldom do we express our inward sor-
rows by Tears and Fasts? David beheld the

Of other
mens sins.

Transgressors, and was grieved; because they kept not Gods word: Horreur seized on him; because they made void Gods Law: Yea Rivers of water ran down his eyes; because they kept not Gods Law; But where is the sorrowing after a Godly sort? Where are the weeping Jeremiah's, Nalsons, Midhopes? or whole Soul, like Lots, is vexed (pierced) with the unclean conversation of the wicked? If ever God did call us to weeping and to mourning, this is the day; but behold joy and gladness, slaying Oxen, killing sheep, eating flesh, and drinking wine; Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we shall die. And it was revealed in mine ears, saith the Lord of Hosts; Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till you die, saith the Lord God of Hosts. When Elijah saw how iniquity abounded, how the worship of God was crushed, how things went among the great ones of those wicked times, how Idolaters were countenanced, the faithfull Prophets durst not shew their faces, he is so burthened at what became of this, that he knows not how to live: *It is enough, take away my life:* He is weary of the world; weary of his own Land, though the best under the cope of Heaven: yea he thinks it a good time to remove, that his eyes may see no more of these detestable things, and that his Soul may be no longer prick'd with these scratching Briars: But the searcher of Hearts knows how little we have been affected with all the shipwracks saith and conscience, that our eyes have seen,

Psal. 119.

158.

V. 53, 136.

1 Pet. 2. 7.

Isa. 22. 12,

13, 14.

2 Kings 19.

4.

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how seldom our heads have been fountains of
 tears, how seldom we have made our bow
 in Bochim's, how insensible we have been of
 all the ungodliness and unrighteousness, which
 we and our people are guilty of. Wo is us,
 we have not been wounded through Gods
 sides: we have not sympathised with a Christ
 Crucified every day; But like Gallio, we have
 not laid these things to heart: And yet we
 have still (impudently enough) laid claim
 to Christ and the priviledges of the New
 Testament, purchased by his blood; Though
 we never followed Christ to the Cross weeping;
 though we have hardly shed one tear for all
 the contempt and abuse of him, which is
 Epidemical, which abounds from Dan to
 Beersheba, from one part of the Nation to
 another. We pretend we have great sor-
 rows, though they are not expressed by
 tears, in a sensitive manner: we think to re-
 lieve our selves with the dryness of our con-
 stitution; and yet we have tears more than a
 good many, to express our sorrows by; if a
 Relation drops into the Earth, we can follow
 the Herse wringing our hands and beating
 our breasts: if an Estate (which we have
 got by carking cares, by neglect of duties,
 heart-duties, and family-duties) be in one
 day consumed, and dissolved by a flame into
 ashes, we then can express our sorrows by
 weeping and lamentation: witness some of
 your howlings, your cries at the late Deso-
 lation by Fire; But commune with your own
 hearts, whether you were ever made so sen-
 sible,

sible, ever so affected and sunk with the consideration of the honour, that God hath lost by you, and by thousands like your selves? Was God ever more affronted by a professing people, than by us? Was ever Christ so set at naught, as of late times? Was he ever more despised in his Person, Offices, and Institutions, by the *Rhabshakah's* of the Earth, than he hath been lately by them, who have had a form of godliness? and yet our hearts are *hard as an Adamant*. O! what grounds have you to question all your mourning for your own sins, whilst you mourn not for the sins of others? Did you mourn for sin, as it is against God? You would mourn for other mens sins; for they are against the Lord also: You would be like *Ezra*, *he rent his garments, pulled off the hair of his beard, sat down astonished for the sinful marriages of the people*: But we are insensible; though God be much more dishonoured by the Adulterers and Adulteresses; by the Blasphemers and Atheists; by the Worldlings and Apostates, who swarm in the midst of us. How can we persuade our selves that the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, whilst he is so much reflected on; and yet we no way (suitably) affected therewith? If a Child, if a Father, if an Husband, if a Friend, be injured, thou art much affected with the injury; but not so with all the affronts that the Sons of *Belial* put upon the blessed God every day. How can we imagine in the least, that we have any true love to the Souls of

our

our Neighbours, whilst we behold them
lifting up the heel against their Maker,
wounding and destroying their Souls by their
sins; and yet we not sigh; if not weep in
secret for the desperate hazards they are run-
ning? Nay, how can you imagine you love
your selves, your estates, liberties, lives, &c.
whilst God is provoked to ruine you and
them for their great provocations? You
know one *Achan* brought a Plague upon the
whole body of *Israel*; and yet his sin was
secret; But we have Street-Drunkards,
Street-Swearers, Street-Adulterers and A-
dulteresses, Street-Scoffers at Piety and the
Worship of God: And are ye not in danger
to partake of the Plagues that these sins are
crying for? And what yet are your hearts as
insensible, as *Rocks*? The Lord be merciful
to you, and take out the heart of stone.
How can you be free from being guilty of all
the known sins of the Land, whilst you do
not mourn for them before the Lord?

Josh. 7.

Nay, to shew yet the greatness of your
stubbornness, you are *insensible* not only of
your own, and other mens sins; but of the
tokens of Gods displeasure against those sins.
God hath emptied us from Vessel to Vessel;
followed us with the *Sword* and *Pestilence*,
and wonderfully so lately by *dreadful flames*:
God hath spoyled us of our glory, and hum-
bled us as low as *dust* and *ashes*: it is a time of
treading down; and therefore we should weep
bitterly: it is a day of darkness and of gloomi-
ness, a day of clouds, and of thick darkness:

Yea, of the
tokens of
Gods dis-
pleasure
against
Sin.
Isa. 22. 45.
Joel 2. 2.

We

Eph. 4. 19.

Psal. 137. 1.

Jer. 31. 18.

We have had such a *Plague*, as *never the like*: such a *Fire* hath been kindled, as *never the like* amongst us: the *Protestant Nations* are very *low*, and the *Antichristian* very bold and confident; yet we can hardly *bang* our *harps upon the Willows*; but as if our hearts were *past feeling*, we are *insensible* both of *sin* and *wrath*. O! I hear some cry out of *hard times*; but there is much more reason to cry out of *hard hearts*. We are too much like *Gideons dry fleece*, and like the *Mountains of Gilboa*, or rather like *Jonah fast asleep*; though the *Winds* blow, the *Seas* roar, and make a *noyse*, and we are ready to be dash'd every hour against the *Rocks*. I confess *Israel* was an *hard hearted* people; but yet they mourned, they cryed with a *voyce*, they *wept* when they remembered *Zion*: So have not we: The *Rod* of old was the only engine, by which *Moses* was to work all his miracles, on the *Rock*, on the *Aegyptians*, on the more *obdurate Israel*: But the *Rock*, *Pharaoh*, and *Israel*, were sooner sensible of the *Rod*, than we have been. How do we evacuate and reproach, frustrate and defame all Gods *Methods*? and pronounce to all the world, that God hath miscarried in his design upon us? God hath not yet heard Ephraim *bemoaning himself*. It is true God hath *chastised* us: but we have not been as sensible as the *Bullock*, nor so soon *tamed*: we have not been *mended* under the *Rod*, nor edified by the *doleful Lectures*, that God hath read us. Therefore thus saith the Lord

Lord God, Wo to the bloody City, I will
 even make the pile for fire great. Heap on
 wood, kindle the fire, consume the flesh, and spice
 it well, and let the bones be burnt: Then set
 it empty upon the coals thereof, that the brass of
 it may be hot, and may burn, and that the
 filthiness of it may be molten in it, that the
 scum of it may be consumed. She hath wearied
 her self with lyes, and her great scum went
 not forth out of her: her scum will be in the
 fire. In thy filthiness is lewdness, because I
 have purged thee, and thou wast not purged,
 thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any
 more, till I have caused my fury to rest upon
 thee. Jerusalem shall be burnt, and why?
 In thy filthiness is lewdness, thou art ob-
 stinate, hardened in wickedness: Obstinacy in
 Sin is worse than the Sin it self. Jerusalem
 had Prophets, Ordinances, Sabbaths, Sacri-
 fices, Mercies, Judgements, by which God
 would have purged her, but she was not purg-
 ed, She did not humble her self for her
 sins, the scum went not off. Therefore thus
 saith the Lord God, Wo to the bloody City,
 to the pot, whose scum is therein, and whose
 scum is not gone out of it, bring it out piece
 by piece, let no lot fall on it. Thou hast stricken
 them, but they have not grieved, thou hast
 consumed them; but they have refused to re-
 ceive correction, they have made their faces
 harder than a rock, they have refused to re-
 turn. This is a Nation, that obeyeth not the
 voice of the Lord their God, nor receiveth cor-
 rection. How many years hath the word of
 the

Ezek. 24.
 9, 10, 11,
 12, 13.

Ezek. 24. 6.

Jer. 5. 3.

Jer. 7. 23.

Jer. 4. 4.

the Lord come to you, that you should circumcise your selves to the Lord, and take away the fore-skin of your hearts; ye men of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem, lest my fury come forth like Fire, and burn, that none can quench it; because of the evil of your doings?

Lam. 2. 3.
4.

And hath not the Lord cut off in his fierce anger the horn of Israel, and burned against us like a flaming fire, which devoureth round about? He hath poured out his fury like Fire. And yet how few behold the desolations that he hath made? How many look on this Judgement as chance, But consider not the hand of the Lord that is gone out against us? Do not some say in the pride and stoutness of their hearts, the Bricks are fallen down, but we

Isa. 9. 10.
Isa. 26. 9.

will build with hewn stones: the Sycamores are cut down, but we will change them into Cedars? When judgement is executed, and Gods hand is lifted up, men should fear, and learn righteousness; But if you will still go on in wickedness, God will reckon with you for despising him, and his judgements. I doubt not but thousands and ten thousands are sensible of poverty coming in upon them and theirs, as an armed man, irresistably: But I fear we are too insensible that it is the Lords controversie with us? How soon was the Pestilential Judgement forgot? Were not men as vile Drunkards, Sensualists, Sabbath-breakers, Oppressors, and Unclean since the dreadful Plague, as before? and others as proud and formal since the Plague, as before? That Arrow shot so remarkably from Heaven,

heaven, was soon forgot : And now that
 the fury of the Lord hath been upon the
 City (and therein upon the whole Land)
 the late Shower of Fire, I am afraid, that
 this Dispensation will be forgotten, at
 least not improved as it ought to be : Many
 and many a time have I feared, that *the Lord* Isa. 29. 10.
hath poured upon us the spirit of a deep sleep,
 and that the Judgement on *Ariel*, is de-
 clared on us : Like men in a deep sleep,
 we are not able to withstand the Judge-
 ment, and like such, we have been in-
 sensible who hath wounded us, or why we
 are wounded : We have not considered
 the deserving Cause, (Pride, Carelessness,
 Intemperance, Idleness, &c.) and what way
 to heal our selves, and extricate our selves
 out of our miseries ? Like *a wild Bull in a net,* Isa. 51. 20.
 that can hamper and entangle it self more and
 more ; but takes no course to wind it self
 out of its misery. Who searcheth for the
Achan, that hath troubled our Israel ? Who
 sits down, and justifieth God ? Who con-
 demneth himself for Pride, for contempt
 of the Gospel, for Luxury, for Idleness,
 for Covetousness, and prophaning Gods
 Sabbaths ? The Lord humble us ; for *the Bel-* Jer. 6. 29.
lows are burnt, the Lead is consumed, and yet
the Founder melteth in vain. The Lord took
 it ill from the men of *Judah*, when they
 were not turned by the signs he gave them
 by *Ezekiel*, When he was to take a *Tile,* Ezek. 4 1;
and pourtray Jerusalem upon it, and lay siege 2, 5, 11, 12.
against it, &c. When he was to lye upon his
 left

- left side 390. dayes: When he was to drink Water by measure, and to bake his Cakes with the dung of man: When he was to take a Razor, and shave his head and beard, and to burn a third part with fire, and to smite a third part with a knife, and a third part to scatter in the wind; and to bind up a few hairs in his skirts, and to take of them again, and to cast them into the midst of the fire: When by these and such like signs, they were not awakened out of their security, when they reformed not, when they feared not the wrath and judgement of God; but said, *It is not near, Let us build houses: Then the glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the City, and stood upon the Mountain, which is on the East side of the City. And when the glory departed, then, Thus saith the Lord, of the Inhabitants of Jerusalem, and of the Land of Israel, They shall eat their Bread with carefulness, and drink their Water with astonishment, &c. And the Cities that are inhabited shall be laid waste. Therefore, thus saith the Lord God, As the Vine-tree among the Trees of the Forrest, which I have given to the fire for fuel, so will I give the Inhabitants of Jerusalem. And I will set my face against them, and they shall go out from one fire, and another fire shall devour them. Such ruines were to attend them, that Ezekiel (though the Messenger of them) yet must sigh, with the breaking of his loynes, and with bitterness; yea, he must cry and howl, and smite upon his thigh. You may easily imagine, if God*
- Ezek. 5. 1, 2, 3.
- Ezek. 11. 3, 23.
- Ezek. 12. 19, 20.
- Ezek. 15. 6, 7.
- Ezek. 21. 5, 12.

so angry with Judah for their insensibility of his wrath, when it hung in the air of threatnings and Types: How much more will he be provoked to fury, if we lay to heart those fearful signs and tokens of his wrath, now that the cloud is dissolved to the Pestilence, Sword, and Fire? O that my bowells may sound like an Harp for Israel! O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night! O that for the mountains I could take up a weeping and wailing; because they are burnt up; because Jerusalem is made desolate; because Gods fury went out like Fire, and he hath burned that none could quench it; because of the evil of their doings! O ye Sons of men, give ye the name of the day, even of the same day, when the God of Heaven set himself against Jerusalem this same day. How oft did we profane that day by gluttony, excessive feasting, gossipings within doors, by unnecessary walks and sports, without doors? How often we cry, when will the Sabbath be gone, that we may attend our callings? Shall not the Land tremble for this? and every one mourn, that dwelleth therein? Your Sun is gone down at Noon-day. God hath turned your Feasts into mourning, and all your Songs into Lamentation. How dare you now make mirth? What, Now drink Wine in Bowls? The Lord take away the heart of stone, and give us hearts of flesh. The Lord poure out a spirit of mourning upon all the Land, that we may lay to heart the wonderful effects of Gods, sore

Isa. 16. 11.

Jer. 9. 1. 11.

Jer. 21. 12.

Ezek. 24. 3.

Amos 8.

5. 8. 9.

Amos 6:
1. 6.

Ezek. 36.
15, 16, 17,
18.

Psal. 46. 8.

1 Cor. 10.
11.

displeasure. *Wo to them that are at ease, and are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph. Shall not the Isles shake at the sound of thy fall? Shall not the Princes of the Sea come down from their Thrones, and lay away their Robes, and put off their broidered garments, and clothe themselves with trembling, and sit upon the ground, and be astonished at thee? and take up a lamentation for thee, and say, how art thou destroyed? thou that wast inhabited by Seafairing men, the renowned City which wast strong in the Sea, She and her Inhabitants? Now let the Isles tremble in the day of thy fall.*

Come behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth. Desolations by the Sword, Desolations by the Pestilence, and desolations by Fire. Some smart that others may Fear. Now all these things happen for examples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the World are come. God means not only to punish, but to teach, and not only the present generation, but all generations to the end of the World? O the much precious blood that the Sword hath devoured! How many thousands hath the Pestilence swept away? And now one of the most flourishing Cities of the Christian World, famous for the Gospel, famous for frequency of Traffick, in a few dayes lyes buried in Ashes, or Rubbish. If we have any bowels of pity, let us weep with them that weep, let us commiserate the grievous sufferings of multitudes of Men: Women, and Children. It is

ccr-

certainly now, a time to weep, and not to laugh. And must our *Jeremiah's* complain of England. This is a Nation that obeyeth not the voice of the Lord their God, nor receiveth correction? If some amongst us are sensible of the heat of the Fire, and other plagues, yet we mourn not, we do not habitually mourn for those sins and provocations, which have moved God to do this work, this strange work upon us and against us: Possibly some cry and howl for the Goods and Houses, that are consumed by Fire, and for their Friends whom the Sword and Pestilence have devoured: But how few are mourning in secret for their contempt of Christ and his Gospel, for controlling and checking the Spirit of God, for their spending away so much time and strength to get a little money, and neglecting to give all diligence to make their calling and election sure? you have mourned for your silver shrines; but not for the pride, carelessness, and covetousness of your hearts: you fear poverty and reproach will be your portion; but why do you not fear what will be the issue of the hardness of your hearts? Hear ye the Word of the Lord, They are not humbled unto this day, neither have they feared, nor walked in my Law, therefore thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, Behold I will set my face against you for evil, and to cut off all Judah. I even I will utterly forget you, and I will forsake you, and the City that I gave you, &c. and will bring an everlasting reproach upon you, &c. And if

Eccles. 3. 4.

Jer. 7. 28.

Isa. 28. 21.

Jer. 44.

Isa. 11.

Jer. 23. 39.

40. 29. 17.

18.

you will not, after all this, turn unto the Lord, read your doom, *I will make them like vile figs that cannot be eaten, they are so evil, &c.* I here publish my fears to all the World: I am afraid that our view of the desolations that God hath wrought, are too short and transient, and that some want humanity in their being insensible of the plagues and miseries of their Brethren, and more want the spirit of mourning for their own and other mens sins. Nay are there none of the Race of Ammon left, who say *Aha against Gods Sanctuary, when it was profaned, and against the Land of Israel, when it was desolate?* at least rejoiced in heart? Behold God will stretch out his hand upon such a people. He that is glad at calamities, shall not be unpunished. The Tower of Sileo fell to lead others to repentance. If any will scoff and blaspheme as the Moabites, by saying, the House of Judah is like unto all the Heathen, who have not suffered more, nor so much as they: God knows how to open the side of Moab, and to let in the Sword and ruine upon their strongest Cities: And if the Children of Edom, who were long ago for razing down our Jerusalem to the foundation thereof, rejoyce, God will remember them, and make them desolate, and lay his vengeance on Edom: And if any of the bordering Philistines shall deal by revenge, and take vengeance with a despightful heart, God knows how to stretch out his hand upon them, and to destroy the remnant of the Sea coast, and to execute great vengeance

Ezek. 25.

3, 6, 7.

Prov. 17.5.

Luke 13.2,

3, 4, 5.

Ezek. 25.

8, 9.

Psal. 137.7.

Ezek. 12.

13, 14.

V. 15, 16,

17.

vengeance upon them : And if any of our Neighbours round about shall with Tyrus say against Jerusalem, *Aha she is broken, that was the gates of the people, she is turned unto us, we shall be replenished, now that she is laid waste* : God can soon stoop these Mountains by causing many Nations to come up against them : as the Sea causeth his Waves to come up, and scrape their dust from them, and make them like the top of a Rock. God cannot bear it that the Heathen should be insulting, whilst he is correcting his own : and therefore God hath confirmed it by an Oath that he will deal severely with such Mockers. I have heard of the reproach of Moab, &c. therefore as I live with the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, surely Moab shall be as Sodom, &c. And I am sore displeased with the Heathen, that are at ease, for I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction. Leave we these to the Righteousness of God, and let us return to our selves: whilst they are insulting, may we be on stumbling and spinning Work. God is come down, and hath done terrible things, that we looked not for: we have been visited; but not with the common visitation of all people. God hath strange punishments for the workers of iniquity. "And no wonder, when strange Oaths have been minted of latter times that our Forefathers never heard of: there have been strange ways of Epicurisme and Gluttony: strange ways of uncleanness: strange unknown fashions in apparel: and for Fraud, cheat-

Ezek. 26.
2, 3, 4.

Amos 3. 2.

Zeph. 2. 3,
9, 10.

Zech. 1. 15.

Ila. 64. 4.
Numb. 16.
Job. 31. 3.

"ing, and Tricks of Legerdmain they have
 "fresh and new, and frequent every day.
 "Hath not God then a just controversy
 "with his people? If the Lord draw out
 "Judgements that were never heard of be-
 "fore, and make us signs and wonders to the
 "world, and an astonishment to all Nations,
 "may we not justifie his proceedings? If we
 "exceed our Fore-fathers Sins, what wonder
 "is it, if we feel Judgements, that they were
 "never sensible of?



CHAP. XXXIX.

What use Professors should make of this Gospel-Glass.

Quarrel
not with
the Glass.]

ANd now (Professor) to all thy for-
 mer Sins, do not add this great abomi-
 nation, that, having had the *Glass* of the
 Word, for faithfully revealing many of thy
 sins to thee, thou shouldst go away and
 strait forget what manner of man thou hast
 been. Let not Satan tempt thee to quarrel
 with the enterprise; for that the *Glass* is not
 broad enough to shew to thee all thy stains
 and deformities: know here are enough
 presented to thy view, to lay thee low
 enough in Hell without Repentance. Per-
 haps

have also by thy corrupt reason thou canst lead for one or two particulars, or bring it under debate, whether they are stains or not? But know to the confusion of thy face, here are spots, unquestionable spots discovered, and such as are not the spots of Gods Children. But wouldst thou improve this (or any other such) Glass for the good of thy soul? Let Gods Honour, and thy precious Souls everlasting welfare perswade thee to receive in thankfulness, and love the following Counsels.

1. Reflect on all the particulars, that thou canst see what are thine iniquities. Do not behold only, and so go away: be not contented with slight apprehensions; but muse, that the Fire may burn: Consider how it in the Bill of Attainder, thy Conscience tells thee thou art guilty. O! ponder these things in thine heart; chew the cud, recoil upon thy self: Let the Lord hear one the more for thee crying out what have I done? How have I provoked the Lord? By meditation retain the memory of thy sins, with all their aggravations, as much as thou canst: let past sins in present view, and possess the sin of thy youth, as if they were just now committed: now track the abominations of your lives: charge this duty upon thy own soul, as that which must be done, as thou wilt answer it at thy peril before God and angels. Perhaps hitherto you have forgot your corrupt lives, and hearts, as you have your natural faces forthwith; but let it be no more for Christs sake. Consider not

Improve it for promoting Consideration and Meditation.

only how many of these sins you have been guilty of; but how frequently, and for how many dayes, or years, thou hast lived in some of these abominations, having oft been guilty of the same sin; though perhaps thou knewst it to be a sin, and hast prayed and resolved against it: And because the particulars may seem little sins (though in a sense there is no little sin; because there is no little God, and sins have their accents and aggravations from the person, who is affronted) yet because it is with sin, as it is with stones, you may carry this stone and that stone without trouble, with much ease; but when many little stones are heaped together, they become weighty and heavy to bear: therefore I advise that by serious meditation you sum them up joyntly, till your backs, or rather your hearts be broken, and you take up the language of the Prophet, *My sins are passed over my head, they are become too heavy for me to bear*: Reflect not only on thy Pride, and carelesness, and other particular miscarriages; but put all the Items into one main Sum, that it may stoop thy heart.

Psal. 38. 4.

Confession.

2. Away now, and present thy self before the great and holy God, whom thou hast provoked by these, by all these great abominations, and upon thy knees give glory to him by confessing to him as many of thy sins, as thou canst remember, with all their aggravating circumstances. It is the same advice, *Josh. 7. 19.* that *Joshuah* gave to *Achan*, tell God what thou

thou hast done, and what thou hast left undone, *Hide it not from him* : Confess to God all thy low unworthy thoughts of him, thy enmity against him, his Laws, and people, &c. Go, and confess what envy, what malice, what rancour hath lain in thine heart against thy Neighbour : Confess to the Lord how oft thou hast *spoke evil of dignities*, of the *blood-royal*, of the favourites of Heaven, of the Sons and Daughters of the most High, who were *more righteous than thy self*. Many a time thou hast brag'd with the Pharisee, what sins thou hast not been guilty of : now confess what thou hast been guilty of. I know if thou art an Hypocrite thou art loth to bring it forth, thou thinkest it will be a shame to thee ; But let me tell thee, it is a shame that thou art guilty of so much sin ; but it is no shame to acknowledge it. Only in your Confessions take this advice. *Set your sins in order* : enumerate the several sins you have been guilty of, and though every numerical thought and Act of sin is not possible to be cited ; yet give diligence to find out as many as thou canst, and spread them before the Lord.

Bring forth especially that sin or sins, which are thy special sins, whereby thou hast most provoked God. David gave a touch at his sins in the beginning of his Penitential Psalm ; but his Adultery and Blood-guiltiness lay most upon him, and he is never at ease till he hath vomited them up in confession.

All your special sins.

Be

Of all of
them.

Be sure then, that upon a review of this, or any better Catalogue, thou cry unto thy heart, as *Samuel to Jesse, Are here all thy Children? Are here all thy sins?* He that doth not confess a sin, hath a mind to commit that Sin again. An hypocrite will confess some, nay many sins, but there is one sin he is loth to bring forth: it is a *Jacobs Benjamin*, they would keep it back: one *Job 20.12. sweet bit is covered under the Tongue.* But certainly it is extream folly to impose upon God; for he knows every thought of thy heart, yea he knows thy thoughts before thou knowst them: he knew what thoughts *Israel* would have in the Wilderness. *David* lay sometime under this piece of Hypocrisie: he kept silence a long time, which made his bones wax old, his moisture was turned into the drought of Summer: But at length (though it was long first) his sin came out, *I acknowledge my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid: I said I will confess my Transgressions unto the Lord.* Be not like *Judas*: he confesseth his betraying of Christ, but there was a close sin which he would not uncover, viz, his covetousness. I meet with many who will confess such sins as are most in fashion, viz. their dulness under Ordinances, their formality, their vain thoughts in duty, &c. But when did you hear Professors confessing their envy at the gifts, graces, and priviledges of their Brethren. *Paul's* sin was persecuting Gods Church, and how ready is he to tell God and all the world of it? A good Copy to write after.

Bring

Bring forth the aggravating circumstances, and lay them before the Lord. Some confess sin, but their confessions are accompanied with strange excuses and extenuations, viz. it was done through the instigation of the Devil, it was done inconsiderately, &c. Such are not for shaming themselves before the Lord; but like Lawyers, plead as well as they can for a bad cause. Avoid all extenuating Confessions: Father not thy Brats upon the Devil, lest thy account swell even for wronging Satan, when indeed thou wast incited and drawn aside by thy own lust. Beware of this folly; for know that extenuating sin aggravates it, and aggravating extenuates sin before the Lord.

Let thy Confession be ingenuous and free. Sometimes Conscience, like an over-charged Stomach, doth so over-press men, that they cannot hold, but must out with their uncleanness, &c. Thus it is especially when the Horrors of Death have compassed them round. This confession of sin proceeds not from hatred of sin, and displicence with it; but from fear of punishment: they hope if they confess sin any how, any way, they shall obtain mercy, and this makes many throw up what otherwise they would hide for ever. But O! that you would be more ingenuous in your acknowledgements than Pharaoh and Judas were, who should say something upon the Wrack, when Gods Hand and Conscience press them down. I know what you will do upon the perusing this sad Catalogue, if

if God do not sanctifie the book unto you: you will confess sin, but not your own: you will fall a censuring the person or party you do not love, crying out O! how guilty are such and such before the Lord? O! how is God dishonoured by them? how doth Religion suffer by them? yea, but how much hath Gods Name suffered by thy lightness, frothiness, pride, sensuality, back-sliding? &c. O! run with tears, and confess all thine own sins before God. God requires it, *Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God: And God tells you it is a means to obtain remission, If ye confess your sins he is just and faithful to forgive.* Some say, *confess, and be hang'd;* but I say *confess, or you'll be damn'd.* If you had rather be damned than be shamed, thou lovest thy Name better than thy Soul: The Lord be merciful to thee, or else thou wilt lose both, when Christ shall come to Judge the Earth; for then whatsoever is hid, shall be published.

Jer. 3. 13.

1 Joh. 1. 9.

Frequently. *Let your Confession be frequent, yea constant, until at least God hath done away thy sin.* It may be you may fear your heart is so hard, that you shall but sin by a formal dull confession, or enumeration of your sins; But yet do it as well as thou canst, and if thy heart be hard, go, and complain of it to God, and beg him to take away the heart of stone: let the sight of this hardness drive thee the sooner and the oftner to the Throne of Grace, and there lye before the Lord, till he cleave the

Rock, that the waters gush out, till thy
ears vye with thy sins: Do as our English
Martyr, who ceased not his Confessions till
his heart was melted and broken for his sins.

3. Labour to get your hearts broken for all
our Rebellions against God; for all the impu-
nities of your hearts and lives. Son of Man,

Contrition.

prophecie and say, thus saith the Lord, say, A
Sword, a Sword is sharpened, and also surbished.

Ezek. 21.
9, 10.

it is sharpened to make a great slaughter:
it is surbished that it may glister; should we
then make mirth? Even our God hath been a
consuming fire: and shall not we mourn?

Heb. 12.

the house of Israel is become dross, even the
silver, and therefore God hath gather-

25.
Ezek. 22.
19, 20, 21.

ed them into the midst of Jerusalem, as they
gather silver and brass, iron, and lead, and tin,
into the midst of the Furnace, to blow the fire up-
on it, and hath blown upon them in the Fire
of his Wrath, and they have been melted in
the midst thereof; and shall not we lament?

Our God hath been exceedingly dishonoured
by Hypocrisie; falshood, breaking of Vows,
murmurings, cruelties, neglects of his
Worship, &c. Should we then make mirth?

Have not we great cause, even more cause
than ever any people had, to tremble, not
only at the dreadful Judgements of God, that
are already upon us, and that hang over our
heads, but at the hellish impieties, that
swarm in our hearts? View not only this im-
perfect Catalogue, but look from Genesis to
the Revelation, and what ever filthiness was
found in Men or Kingdoms, may be found

upon

upon our skirts: and shall not we hang up our harps? refuse to be comforted? Shall not we lye down prostrate before God, and pour out water before the Lord, and weep till we can weep no more? Tremble O my heart! under all these provocations: And let your hearts be as the leaves of a Tree that is shaken by the Whirlwind. What for many hellish lusts to swarm in thy heart? What guilty of so many millions of iniquities against the God of Heaven, and yet thou secure, light, vain and frothy? I profess if I did not know what a stone I have within, I should wonder all the day long, how it is possible we can stand under so much guilt without shrieks, cries, and lamentations: I should wonder how you eat, and drink, and sleep, how you can laugh or sing, whilst God is so provoked. Can I think that man lives, who is not moved by the weight of a mountain on his back. Professor, thou hast that which is heavier than Mountains of Lead upon thy Soul, and yet thou hardly seekest it: Thou dost not groan under that, which drew not only tears of water, but of blood, yea clots of blood, from the eyes and veins of Jesus Christ. I wonder how you continue your claims to Christ, how you can call God, Father, Christ, Redeemer, whilst you have so little love to him, and whilst you were never pricked at the heart, for all the injuries that you and others have done him: Whom you love, you are troubled for, if he be injured, by your selves, or others:

But

where is your soul-trouble for your own
 and other mens sins? Are not many as sensual
 ever? as great servants to the flesh as ever?
 have you not your Feasts and Entertainments
 formerly? Though it be a day, wherein
 the Lord calls to weeping and mourning, to
 sadness and girding with sackcloth; yet be-
 hold joy and gladness, slaying Oxen, and kil-
 ling Sheep, eating flesh, and drinking wine;
 and hath not the Lord sent you a word, that
 may make your knees to tremble? Is not the
 handwriting plain? *It was revealed in mine*
ear, by the Lord of Hosts, Surely this ini-
quity shall not be purged from you, till you dye,
sith the Lord God of Hosts. O! Fall down
amazed, fill thy Spirit with horror, away
from thy Closet: though thou art in the gall
of bitterness, and bond of iniquity; yet pray to
the Lord, if perhaps the thoughts of thy heart,
and the wickedness and prophaneſs of thy
heart, and particularly thy unseasonable mirth,
and fleshly indulgencies, may be forgiven.
 how can you trade with so much guilt upon
 you? You have had your pleas for your co-
 rousness, and inordinate affections to the
 World, that God bids you provide for your
 own: But what thinkest thou of thy Soul? Is
 that no part of thine own? Is that no piece
 of thy charge? O! Provide for thy soul:
 thy soul cannot be safe, whilst stained with
 many thousand impurities, which were
 never mourned over to this day. O! Let
 sorrow enter into the very inwards of thy
 heart, and let the insupportable pressures of
 sin

Zech. 12.
10.

fin sink thy very Soul : Mourn as the tender Mother for her only Son : be in bitterness, so as thou canst not relish those things, which thou hast hitherto followed with so much eagerness : Let the loathsomeness of thy sins be continually before thine eyes, as thy standing dish : So it was with repenting David, My sin is ever before me : So it was with the Church, *Wo to us, we have sinned.* It is true, they were under fearful Plagues :

Psal. 51. 3.

Lam. 5. 16.

Lam. 1. 1,

2, 3, 4, 9,

13, 21.

How doth the City sit solitary, that was full of people? How is she become a Widow, She that was great among the Nations, and Princess among the Provinces, how is she become tributary? ——— Among all her Lovers, she hath none to comfort her, all her Friends have dealt treacherously with her, &c. She dwelleth among the Heathen, she findeth no rest : all her Persecutors overtook her between the straits. The wayes to Zion mourn, &c. She came down wonderfully, and she had no Comforter, &c. The Enemy hath magnified himself, &c. From above hath he sent fire into my bones, and it prevaileth against them, &c. All mine Enemies have heard of my trouble, that are glad that thou hast done it. The Lord hath burned against Jacob like a flaming fire, which devoureth round about, &c. All they that pass by, clap their hands at thee : they hiss, and wag the head, at the Daughter of Jerusalem, saying, Is this the City, that men call, the Perfection of Beauty, the Joy of the whole Earth? All thine Enemies have opened their mouth against thee : they hiss, and gnash the teeth,

Lam. 2. 3,
15, 16.

Lam. 4. 6,
11, 16.

and say, We have swallowed her up : Certain-
 ly this is the day we looked for, We have found,
 We have seen it. The punishment of the ini-
 quity of the Daughters of my people, is greater
 than the punishment of the sin of Sodom, that
 was overthrown as in a moment, and no hand
 layed on her. The Lord hath accomplished
 his fury, he hath poured out his fierce anger,
 and hath kindled a fire in Zion, and it hath de-
 voured the foundations thereof. The anger of
 the Lord hath divided them, &c. Our Inhe-
 rance is turned to Strangers : our Houses to
 Aliens. Our Necks are under Persecution,
 We labour, and have no rest. Servants have
 ruled over us : there is none to deliver us out of
 their hand. Our skin was black like an Oven :
 because of the terrible Famine. They ravished
 Women in Zion, and the Maids in the Ci-
 ties of Judah. But yet they mind not their
 misery, so much as their sin, Wo unto us,
 for we have sinned. In order to the promo-
 ting of this godly sorrow, I do importune
 thee, with the highest fervency I can, that
 thou separate some extraordinary time, to
 humble thy self, by Fasting and Prayer,
 that God would give thee Repentance, for
 thine own, and thine other mens sins : Per-
 haps to this day thou hast never observed one
 in order to the getting of a broken heart. O
 that I could now prevail with thee ; for this
 is the means, that God hath blest again and
 again. On such dayes God hath softened ma-
 ny an heart, and cast out the Devil of secu-
 rity and hardness, which could not be cast

Lam. 5. 21
 8, 10, 11.

out in ordinary times of waiting upon God : Let thy main request on that day be for a deep consideration of all thy sins, with all their several aggravations, and a deep humiliation for them. O ! I beseech you, if you have any love to Christ, to the credit of Religion, to your perishing souls, break through all businesses and impediments, and retire your selves, and fall down at the footstool of God, more solemnly, than ever you did : If you are, by the consideration of your provocations, humbled in the very dust, be sure to keep Conscience tender ; Let not your convictions dye, strike again and again, *smite on the thigh* again and again, whilst the Iron is hot : This fire may be kept alive, by bringing new fuel to it. Labour exquisitely to afflict your souls, that you should be so foolish, so vile, as under Christs Livery, to commit so great, and so hideous abominations. Take words, and say, *O the Light that I have abused ! O the means of Grace that I have slighted ! O the little service that I have done to Christ ! O the many dis-services ?* Let these things cut, and grave, and afflict, and humble thy soul exceedingly from morning to evening, and from evening to morning, till God be pacified towards thee : beware lest the motions of a lazy heart cause thee to desist sooner. A Patient that hath had a long disease, must continue in the use of the prescriptions, till the ill humour be purged away.

4. Let your sorrow be accompanied with Indignation. See all your sins and lothe them, and your selves too. This is promised, *they shall lothe their wayes and doings which are not good*? O! how much sin have we confessed, which yet we have secretly hug'd in our hearts? Labour to have your hearts rise against your pride, hypocrisie, &c. Hate is not only for Hell, but as Hell, yea hate your selves for your sins, yea hate your selves that you can hate your sins no more. *O that my hatred of my Lusts might be greater than my love was unto them!* I wish from my soul Professors were more apprehensive of Gods Judgements, that are upon them and the Nation for their sins: I wish many of us were come up to the frames of the hardened Jews, and expressed so much tenderness, as they did, when Gods hand was heavy upon them, their sins also were an heavy burden: *In their affliction they sought God* Hol. 7. 14. *only: they mourned and humbled themselves very much; though with the removal of their trouble: their sorrows wore away.* However be not satisfied with this sorrow; but labour for such sorrow as David had, when he was wounded in his heart for sin, though Nathan told him his sin was forgiven, yet he continued his sorrows for his great transgressions: Labour I beseech you for years of hatred and indignation, be greatly displeased with your selves, because you have so foolishly and wretchedly dishonoured God, and ventured your eternal undoing:

and if yet thine eyes be not like the *Fish-ponds of Heshbon* for thy sins, take words, and lament before God thine hardness of heart, that thou shouldst so grievously offend and provoke God, so good, so gracious a God, and that notwithstanding thine heart should remain unbroken.

Supplication.
on.

5. *Let there be added hearty cries to God for pardon of all these and all other abominations.* Who forgives him, that scorns to sue for Remission? Here is your work in this day: the Devil and a false heart will put you upon other work; but this is your present work: *They made me the keeper of the Vineyard; but mine own Vineyard I have not kept.* But O! do not leave the work that God sets you about. I know it is your duty to provide for the bodies of your Children; but consider the danger of thy Soul, what guilt thou art under, and give the Lord no rest till he hath blotted out all thy sin, and art assured that he will remember it no more. Relieve not thy self with the general bounty of God, or with the free grace and rich mercy of God, whilst thou neglectest to cry to God for grace and mercy. *He will be sought unto by the house of Israel.* Prize thy condition, that thou art alive to pray: (thou mightst have been in Hell, there to *bowl* for ever and ever) *Seek the Lord, whilst he may be found:* Seek in time before it be too late: And if thou doubtest whether thou hast an interest in Christ and the promises, because of thy hideous transgressions; yet remember the

the gracious words that fell once from the mouth of Christ to the Samaritan: *If thou didst know the gift of God, thou wouldst have asked, and he would have given thee living water.* John 4.10.

Though thou art unworthy of Childrens bread, and hast deserved to be cast forth among the dogs; yet thou hast to do with a bountifull and mercifull Lord: and therefore be not cast down, so as to be discouraged from waiting on the Lord. It was ill said of him, *why should I wait on the Lord any longer? There is no hope.* I would have thee take better words into thy mouth, and say, "Lord I am unworthy to be the object of thy mercy, unworthy to live, worthy to be denyed, because thou didst call, and I did not hear, therefore if I call, thou mayst justly turn me off in thy fury: thou mightest answer me by terrible things in righteousness: But deal not with me according to my deservings: O! make me the great instance of the power of thy grace, let thy mercy in pardoning be great, exceeding great O God!

Do not delay the suing out thy pardon, away quickly to the Throne of Grace. Remember. *Felix* put off his work till some other time. There is danger in delays, lest your sense of sin and sorrow for it vanish and decay: blow up the first sparks of grace, lest they go out and dye again: take the first advantages of the grace of God. Hast thou an inclination to humble thy self, to pray, to seek Gods face, improve it quickly, lest the

Without delay.

wrath of God (who is highly provoked already against thee) break forth upon thee, *and there be no remedy.* Do not you know that you have lost the sense of the love of God ? But have you also lost all the sense of Gods wrath ! Do not you wonder you escape ? that you are yet alive ? that you are not free *among the dead ?* incorporated with the Hypocrites and damned crew ? Will you, dare you, go on in your hardness of heart ? Will you *treasure up wrath against the day of wrath ?* O ! God forbid. Lay by the world (thy false friend , thy treacherous *Joab*, that hath smitten to the earth, with its kisses, and its smiles) Here is a business on which thy life, the life of thy precious soul depends. *Prepare to meet thy God :* wrath is gone out from the Lord, howl, weep, cry, *it may be you shall be bid in the day of the Lords wrath,* it may be your sins shall be forgiven. Though the Law be a *looking-glass* to shew you your spots (the *Laver* under the Law was made of *looking-glasses*) yet it cannot cleanse you : it is the Gospel alone, that pardons. Away ye *wandering Sheep to the great Shepherd of your souls :* great he is in affection and love to his flock , he hath laid down his life for you, he hath purchased you with his own blood. *Nathans Parable* of the *Ewe-Lamb* is most true of Christ, and his beloved Flock : he hath nourished you up, and he is willing to lay you in his bosom. View your great Surety this day. He came under an Arrest for you , he hath discharged the debt

Heb. 13.
20.

debt of all that come by faith to him. He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. He is willing the in-
 cessant (when penitent) should not have his wounds lye undressed, lest Satan take any advantage thereby. If there be Repentance to-
 wards God, let there be Faith towards the Lord Jesus Christ. If he hath given you the
 fore-runner, you have his pledge, his pawn, that he will forgive you. Do not say, God
 heareth not sinners, whilst there is a Foun-
 tain opened for sin and for uncleanness. All thy
 sins cannot shut it; because it is opened to wash
 away sin.

Rom. 4/ 25.

Act. 20. 21.

6. Add to Supplication Resolution. How can you pardon your very Child, that will
 not promise to do so no more? Let it be in
 the purpose of your hearts to neglect medi-
 tation no more, to keep up bitterness a-
 mong Christians no more, &c. Enter into
 an holy Vow against your sins. Be a *through*
Protestant, protest against the *World*, the
Flesh, and the *Devil*. It will be thus if your
 hearts be thoroughly humbled for your sins,
 and truly inflamed against them. O say!
what have I to do with Idols any more? O that
 you were very resolute, come Life, come
 Death, come Heaven, come Hell; yet I
 will change my course: I will not (through
 Gods grace helping me) do as I have done,
 omit as I have omitted. If you are not very
 peremptory to resist Satan and Sin, not to
 yield unto Temptation, you encourage the
 Enemy to tempt you, whilst you are not re-

Resolution.

solved to deny his solicitations. That woman is in danger of new solicitations to uncleanness, who doth not resolutely bid defiance to the first Temptation of the Ruffian. Perhaps you wonder, that after many prayers, &c. your sin still prevails; But know (saith one) *sin will be your Conquerour, if you be not resolved to be its enemy.* Till resolution against all sin be wrought in you, God will hate all your prayers for the pardon of your sins. He hath an impudent forehead, a forehead of Brass, that dares go in before God, and say: "O Lord! I beseech thee to pardon my worldliness, and earthly-mindedness, for I am not yet resolved to be Heavenly minded: O Lord, pardon my envy, and I trust thou wilt do it, for yet I am unresolved to part from it: Pardon my Rebellions; for I am not yet resolved whether I shall cease to be a Rebel. Believe it, whilst you do not resolve to hate sin, it is a clear sign you have not a spiritual knowledge of its evil: Did you in the light of the Spirit see sin in its nature, and in its bitter effects, did you see it as utterly inconsistent with all real happiness, and as the infallible and unavoidable precipice of your intollerable and eternal damnation, this would make you hate sin, and to be irreconcilable to it.

In the
strength of
Christ.

But here I must give you this caution, that you *raise not your resolutions on your own strength*, for then you will soon quit them by reason of your own weakness. When you

you bind your self by a Vow against such a sin, take Christ into the Bond to be surety for you, to give you help and strength to perform in the hour of temptation. " *Augustine* professed that though the thoughts of leaving his sins were once a great burthen to him, yet at length being peremptorily Resolved, he found it a most easie and delightful thing to live without them. Friends, your sufferings may be nearer than you are aware of: Your sands I am sure run fast, and no stop is put to them: you may not expect that the shadow will go backward in degrees, it may rather go forward: you may hardly have one hours warning before you must remove hence: how suddenly hath God cut down the Cedars and the Thistles amongst us? O! in that day it will be as a burning lead to thee, that death and judgement surprized thee, when thou hadst not so much as resolved to leave thy cursed Rebellions against thy God.

7. See what becomes of your Resolutions: Reformation. how they are made good: thou hast purposed Psal. 119. not to offend, yea covenanted with thy God 106. for better obedience, yea thou hast sworn to keep his righteous Judgements. But hast thou dealt uprightly with thy God? O! be not satisfied with purposes and resolutions; but look to the performances of them. Blessed are ye of God, if all the sins you have been convinced of, and have engaged against, be now put away: if there be no more pride, covetousness, contention, self-

Self-seeking, &c. returning with seven worse Devils upon you. I pray God we may see (more than Resolution) some real and permanent effect of all your Confessions, Sorrows, and Resolves. "O! O! O! how
 "would it rejoyce my Soul to see an effectual
 "Qual alteration in the Faces, and Lives,
 "and Conversations of Professors? How
 "shall I bless God for ever, if by seeing
 "your Faces in this imperfect Glass, you be
 "transformed, and your hearts and lives be
 "put into a new frame of obedience? Among
 "mong all the sights in the World, none
 "sadder than to see multitudes, that had
 "their Faces Zion-wards now facing about
 "to the vanities of the Gentiles. O! how
 "glorious, how desirable a sight will it be
 "to see these returning with weeping and
 "supplication.

General.

Here remember your Reformation must be general and special, O! Labour to do as much for God and Grace, as you have done for the World and Self. As ye have yielded your members servants to iniquity unto iniquity: So

Rom. 6. 19.

now yield your members Servants of Righteousness unto Holiness. Redeem all former omissions by a double diligence: you having idled away much of your time, had need spur up your selves. See that you walk circumspectly, not as Fools, but as Wise, redeeming the time.

Special.

But it is not only a general Reformation that I advise you to: Watch also and pray against those sins by which you have most dishonoured

God. If thou art recovered of a dangerous disease, thou wilt generally use a good diet, but especially get Antidotes and Preservatives against that disease thou wast lately cured of. O, where the enemy hath made the greatest breaches, there let these be double guards, and double fortifications. Be *Tertullians* true penitents: He would not burthen the Spirit of God, again to deliver him from that sin. Follow a worthy Pattern, When *David* had shed blood, and had prevailed with God to pardon that sin, afterwards, though he longed for the waters of *Bethshem*, yet he abstains, and checks himself, because it did but hazard the blood of his Cap-
tains.

*Non vult
iterum Di-
vine mis-
ericordie
operi, &c.
Tert.*



CHAP. XXXIX.

Motives to make such use thereof.

And now (to hasten to a conclusion) O that it would please God to make my words as an Hammer, to break the Rocks! O that I may be thus useful to your Souls! O that somewhat at last may be hinted, that may, through the blessing of God, break your hearts for, and from sin! that may promote your Repentance for your own, and your other
mens

Motives
to let our
hearts be
broken for
and from
our Sins.

mens sins ! And indeed unless your hearts be broken for sin, they will never be broken from sin ; But the more bitterness of Spirit you are in for sin, the more probability there is you will not return unto sin. When men have surfeited upon a Dish, and are greatly afflicted and pained by it, the more unlikely they are to return again unto that Dish. That is certain (saith Mr. Burroughs) either a mans sin will make an end of his mourning, or his mourning will make an end of his sin. Yea, if your hearts be not broken for other mens sins, they are not kindly broken for your own sins. You will never put it out of all doubt that your sorrow is right and genuine, unless you mourn for others, as well as your own sins ; for it will alwayes be objected, that if Sin as Sin were your Burden, if Sin as dishonouring God, as wounding Christ, as grieving the Spirit, then other mens sins being reflexions on the Authority and Will of the great God, Father, Son, and Spirit, should have some considerable weight upon your Souls. The truth is, others sins become thine if thou knowest them, and mournest not for them. O then ! In what a case are all the hardned jolly Professors, who can make a sport of Drunkenness, Uncleaness, Superstition, Perjury, &c. in others. Consider therefore by the Help of this Glass others sins, as well as thine own to help on thy brokenness of heart for and from sin. Behold (with David) the transgressor, and be grieved : because they keep not Gods word : Let your Souls

Souls (with Lot) be vexed : there are great-sins found among Professors in England, as were in Sodom : Let thy Soul be (as his) as in Hell, as upon the Rack. How can you have evidence that you are translated from death to life, because you love the Brethren, while you are not troubled to see them rounding and damning their souls by their sins : you are grieved to see any Friends of yours in great hazards and dangers by the sword, by Sicknes, by Fire ; but the Souls of your Friends are in the greatest danger, yet you lament not the sight of these deplorable spectacles. God forbid that any of you should have grounds of hope to gain Liberties and outward Priviledges by others provocations, whilst all their sins become yours, whilst you are not humbled for them. But lay before you some Considerations, that may (set home by the Spirit) draw water out of the Flint.

1. *Should not your hearts be broken for and from sin, seeing sin hath so incensed God against the Land of your Nativity ? Can you retire from the World, and seriously consider the prints of Gods displeasure against poor England, and yet remain impenitent ? Is it nothing to you, that God hath for many years been withdrawing from his Sanctuary in England ? O ! Your Ministers have had miscarrying Wombs, and dry Breasts : Though they rose early, and sate up late, were much in watchings, and in labours, for the Conversion and Edification of Souls ; yet how seldom*

God is greatly incensed.

dom have any been under the Pangs of the New Birth? How seldom were any pricked at the heart? How seldom have any cried out, *What shall we do to be saved?* And for others (concerning whom we hoped better things) How have they shed their Leaf? How have they pined and withered away, as to *Practical Godliness*? How have they lost that *Seriousness*, that *Heavenliness*, that *Power of Godliness*, which before they seemed to have had? Your Ministers saw this, and lamented it, they acquainted you with it, invited you to remember from whence you are fallen, to repent, and do your first works; But yet You returned not unto the Lord. Should not this pierce your very hearts? Is it nothing to you, that not only your selves, but so many Professors in England, should lose their faithful and painful Ministers? Is it nothing to you, for God to call home by Death, and otherwise, so many of his *Embassadors*, whom you have grieved, whom you have despised and affronted, and who have been more burthened with your *Pride*, *Earthliness*, *Divisions*, *Sensuality*, &c. than they are with their present *Poverty* and *Dis-honours*, under which they lye? What doth it portend, save *War* and *Hostility*, when *Embassadors* are called home? And may not you fear, that the wrath of God is, and will be against you, till there be no remedy? They mocked the Messengers of God, and despised his Words, and misused his Prophets, untill the wrath of the Lord arose against his people,

till

If there was no remedy. If God will treat with you no more: believe it, he will fight with you. And O! O! O! Who will set the Thorns and Thorns against him? He will go through them, he will consume them in his wrath. Is it nothing to you, that there is yet a Spirit of Division in the Land? O! What heats and heart-burnings, what animosities and jealousies are there? so that a Brother cannot trust a Brother. Is it nothing to you, that God hath been so long contending with the Land, by the Sword, and by the Pestilence, and so lately by Fire? Is it nothing to you, that God permitted that dreadful Fire in London to break forth about Three of the Clock on a Lords Day morning? Did he thereby cause his Sabbath in a manner to be profaned in London? Did not he make his holy Day of Rest, a Day of labour and disquiet? Did not he hereby as it were anticipate his peoples conventions to expiate him, and so remove them as it were off from the Remedy, that his hands being loosened, he might punish, and not be prevailed with to pardon? May we not say with Jeremiab, even upon this account, The Lord hath swallowed up all the Habitations of Jacob, and hath not pitied, he hath thrown down in his wrath the strong holds of the Daughters of Judah, he hath brought them down to the ground? Is it nothing, that at the same time, God should send forth such a boisterous Wind, to fann and blow up the Fire, East, West, South, and North, God therein executing the Judge-

2 Chron. 7.

12.

Deut. 9.

14.

Jer. 2. 2.

- Jer. 49. 36. Judgement threatned against *Elam*, of bringing the four Winds from the four Quarters of Heaven, &c. If the punishment of one Element (saith a late Writer) be dreadful, as the *Water* was to the old *World*; and the *Air* is in Pestilential Infections; and the *Earth* was, when it opened its mouth to swallow up *Corah*, and his company; how dreadful is Gods punishing a Land or Person with double and treble Judgements in one? What vengeance is that like to prove, which hath Gods Armies of Fire and Wind united? Is it nothing, that the Fire burned at some time contrary to the Wind, and as it were in opposition to it, and was then as uncheckable, as when it had the Winds raising and chasing it? Is it nothing, that in the drought of the season, and the want of water, God seem'd to hinder the application of Remora's to both Wind and Fire? Was not therein the Judgement executed upon *England* in its heart, which God threatned against the
- Jer. 50. 38. *Chaldeans*, a drought is upon her Waters, and they shall be dried up; for it is a Land of graven Images, and they are mad upon their Idols? Is it nothing, that the rational and probable anticipations of the conflagrating progresses of the Fire, which might have been, were hid from the eyes of those, whose interest it would have been to have improved them? Did not God at that time take courage from the mighty, and wisdom from the wise? Is it nothing, that *London*, the great Bulwark of the Reformed Religion, against

against the assaults and batteries of Popery
and Prophaneſs, is in a great meaſure de-
stroyed? But (above all) Is it nothing,
that generally there is ſo little ſenſe of any
of theſe Judgements? *The Wine of Aſtoniſh-
ment is given us to drink, and we reel to and
fro like Drunkards; But alas! Who humbly
confeſs, and prayes, and ſeeks Gods face, and
turns from his wicked wayes, that God may heal
his Land?*

2 Chron. 7.
14.

2. Should not your hearts be broken for and
over your ſins, ſeeing the ſins of any one of you
in particular may have been the great Incendi-
ary? This is certain, God hath, for the de-
quency of one man, yea for one ſin,
brought Plagues upon many. If any thing
will move thine heart, this will; but no-
thing will without Gods concurrence: The
Lord ſaſten this nail, the Lord fix this upon
thy ſoul, and let it be as *Frontlets* between
thine eyes day and night. When *Acban* was
guilty of one ſin, and that a ſecret one,
when he had ſtole a wedge of Gold, when
he had impropriated it to his own uſe, which
God had deſtined to another, he troubled
the whole Church of God: *the Armies of Iſ-
rael ſell before the men of Ai, the generation
of Gods curſe, yea Joſhua, their Prince be-
came dejected, and his communion with
God was thereby for a while broken. And
the Lord ſaid unto Joſhua, get thee up:
wherefore lyeſt thou on thy face? Did not A-
chan the Son of Zerah commit a treſpaſs in the
curſed thing, and wrath fell on all the Con-*

The ſins of
any one of
us may be
the Incen-
diaries.

Joſh. 7.
10, 11, 12,
&c. 22. 20.

Josh. 22.
17.

2 Sam. 21.
1.

2 Kings 23.
26.

gregation of Israel? And that man perished not alone in his iniquity. The iniquity of Peor, though committed long ago, yet raised a cloud of wrath, which was ready to empty it self upon the whole Church of God for it many years after. Is the iniquity of Peor too little for us from which we are not cleansed to this day, although there was a Plague in the Congregation of the Lord? The Gibeonites (who had craftily secured their Lives, by an exchange for their Liberties) got an Oath from Saul, and almost 500 years after, when this Covenant was broken, in the slaying of many of them, and Saul was dead, the flourishing Church of God suffered three years Famine for this Perjury. Then there was a Famine in the days of David, three years, year after year, and David enquired of the Lord: And the Lord answered, It is for Saul, and for his bloody house; because he slew the Gibeonites. Manasseh sinned, and that cost the Liberties and Lives of many, good as well as bad: Notwithstanding the Lord turned not from the fierceness of his great anger, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the Provocations that Manasseh had provoked him withall. Pharaoh refused to give liberty to Gods Church, to worship their God, and this brought unparallel'd Judgements and Plagues upon the whole Land of Egypt. Amalecks abuse of Gods people was not forgotten for an hundred years; but God took up an everlasting quarrel with them, till

till he had rooted them out of the Earth. Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, I remember that which Amaleck did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt. Yea, the Sins of one good man, have brought down Plagues upon many. David (whether out of curiosity, or vain-glory, or confidence in an arm of flesh) would needs number the people, (a little sin in comparison of what we are guilty of) yet it cost the lives of 70000. by the Pestilence. So the Lord sent a Pestilence upon Israel, &c. and there dyed of the people, from Dan even to Beersheba; seventy thousand men. Solomon was a good Prince, and yet by his sins he brought miserable confusions on the most considerable part of the Church of Israel, by that great revolt which it occasioned. Wherefore the Lord said to Solomon, For as much as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my Covenant, and my Statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the Kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy Servant. Eli, a good man, and a good Magistrate, yet because too indulgent to his Children, (a Vice common, but seldom considered and bewailed) what a fearful Plague brought he upon his Posterity, as well as himself? And the Lord said unto Samuel, Behold I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that beareth it shall tingle. In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his House: When I begin, I will also make an end; for I have

1 Sam. 15.
2.

2 Sam. 24.
15.

1 King. 11.
11.

1 Sam. 3.
11, 12, 13,
14.

Luke 11.
50, 51.
Mat. 23.
35, 36.

2 Sam. 24.
17.

Jer. 8. 6.

told him, that I will judge his House for ever, for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his Sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not. And therefore I have sworn unto the House of Eli, that the iniquity of Elies House shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering for ever. The blood of all the Prophets, (saith Christ) which was shed from the Foundation of the World, shall be required of this Generation, from the blood of Abel, unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the Altar and the Temple: Verily, I say unto you, it shall be required of this Generation. And yet who holds up his hand to Gods Barr, and cries, Guilty, Guilty? Who saith as David, when the Angel forraged among the People; Let thy hand be against me; for these sheep, What have they done? We are quick-sighted enough, yea too much, to espy and aggravate the sins of others: We expect fearful Plagues for others Adulteries, Drunkennesses, Swearing and Blaspheming: But the Lord bearkneth when we will own our Sins to be the Incendiaries, saying, What have I done? And What have I done, to stop the mouths of so many of Gods faithful Ministers, to unsheathe the Sword, to bring forth the destroying Angel, to kindle the dreadful Fire in London? Are there not such sins amongst us, for which God hath plagued much people? If secret sins of particular Persons, have drawn down wrath on whole Nations, Why not thy scandalous sins? Say no more, such Opposition, Oppression, Idolatry,

latry, uncleanness, &c. will bring in misery as an armed man: but say, there is danger lest God should make an utter end of poor England for my pride, for my unthankfulness, for my trusting in an Arm of flesh, for my back-slidings: O! how many have I caused to fall by the *Sword*? and how many by the *Pestilence*? And how many have I caused to be ruined by the *Fire*? Verily, if thou art guilty of no other sin, save pride, yet thou canst not clear thy self from being one of Englands Incendiaries. O! how was the wrath of God upon *Jerusalem*, and *Judah*, because *Hezekiah's* heart was lifted up? But *Hezekiah* rendred not again according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up: therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon *Judah*, and *Jerusalem*.

2 Chron.
32. 25.

3. Should not your hearts be broken for and from your sins, seeing without repentance the mercies you are deprived of, because of your sins, will never be returned, or not in mercy, yea greater judgements will follow? Unless you return unto God, from whom you have departed, God will not return unto your Souls. If ye forsake him, he will forsake you, imports as much, as if you continue to forsake him, he will continue to forsake you. If you repent not, God will not return your liberties, your trade, his own Ordinances in purity and power, or at least he will not return these, or any other mercies, you have sinned away, in mercy: But you may expect greater judgements than e-

No Repentance,
no returns
of mercy,
but more
wrath.

2 Chron.
19. 2.

Luke 13.

Luk. 5.

Luk. 6.25.

ver yet you saw, to fall, not only upon your selves and families, but upon the Land. Think not that they were the greatest sinners in England, upon whom the Sword, or Pestilence, or Fire fell : Remember Christs I tell you Nay, but except you repent you shall all likewise perish. *Wo unto you that laugh now, for ye shall mourn and weep : And will you run the hazard of this dreadful Wo ? Will you run the hazarding of perishing all, and altogether ? Is it not better to mourn now, than to cry and howl in the pit of Hell for ever ?* God hath determined within his own breast, nay he hath expressed this to be his pleasure to the Children of men, that sooner, or later, all shall mourn for sin, either in this life, or in the next : And is it not better to feel the weight here, than on a death bed, or in Hell ? What said a Russian once ; when in the midst of his jovial Companions he clapt his hand on his breast, and cryed out well, *one day I must know what a wounded Conscience meaneth.* God is resolute in this, you shall one time or other find it an evil and bitter thing to provoke him. And shall this consideration nothing move you ? I know this should not be the chief ground of your sorrow : But yet Christ was no legal Preacher, when he cryed out, *sin no more lest a worse thing happen to you. Go thou sluggard to the Ant, provide in Summer for the Winter.* But O the great cheats that poor souls put upon themselves ! they hope, though they repent not, though they remain carclets, worldly, &c.

yet

yet others are not so careless as they : though they fast not, yet they hope some do : though they spend not dayes in prayer, they hope others do ; and they hope to fare the better for them. This is like the Doctrine of Rome : the Romanists teach that there are some *opera penalia*, some penitential works, that you may have others to do for you, and yet fare as well as if you did them your selves : But for my part I shall as soon believe that I shall be cured of the stone in the bladder, or of a filthy Leprosie by anothers taking Physick for me, as that I shall be saved by anothers repentance. O ! what folly is this to take relief and sanctuary in others servent Petitions and deprecations of wrath, whilst thou thy self cryest out, *Soul take thine ease store is laid up for thee by others ?* Alas ! how dost thou know what others are a doing ? Do they blow the Trumpet, when they go to fast ? the more likely it is that they be Hypocrites. But hath not God said, *Go through the midst of the City, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark (only) upon the foreheads of the men, that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof ?* and again, *Son of man, when the Land sinneth against me by transgressing grievously, then will I stretch out mine hand upon it, and will break the staff of the bread thereof, and will send a famine upon it, and will cut off man and beast from it. Though these three men, Noah, Daniel and Job were in it, they should deliver but their own souls, by their righteousness, saith the Lord God.*

Ezek. 9. 4.

Ezek. 14.
13, 14.

Hh 4

4. Should

Impen-
tents lose
all they
do and
suffer for
God.

4. Should not your hearts be broken for, and from your sins, seeing so long as you are impenitent, all you do, and suffer for God is abominable in his sight? Hardness of heart is a nasty disease; it is like a Leprosie, that makes all to shun a man: If you had such a disease, that all would abhor you, would it not humble you to the very dust? your impenitency makes you neither fit company for God, nor his Saints: you are loathsome in the sight of both, whilst you are under so much guilt, and yet insensible of it. A tender broken hearted Christian is lovely in Gods, and his peoples eyes; but how ugly a sight is it to see a daring, bold, insensible sinner, persisting in a course of sin, without repentance? *If the wicked will turn from all his sins, that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, &c. in his righteousness that he hath done shall he live, &c. But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doth according to all the abominations, that the wicked man doth, shall he live? all his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned. And is it nothing to you to lose the things you have wrought? Is it nothing to suffer, and to suffer so many things in vain?*

Ezek. 18.
21, 22, 24.
2 Ep. of
John v. 8.

Gal. 3. 4.

Their per-
sons are
loathed.

5. Should not your hearts be broken for, and from your sins, seeing so long as you are impenitent God doth not only loath your services, but he cannot take any delight in your persons, yea you cannot be restored into his love and favour? without Repentance there is no Remission:

son:

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son: Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out. And what? have you no mind to be forgiven your own and your other mens sins? have you no will to be at peace with God, and to be restored into his love and favour? Are you content that all these, and innumerable sins more should be charged upon your Account? O then! beg of God to break your hearts for, and from your sins, A broken vessel, a broken heart, will hold best the oyl of mercy. The Sacrifices of God are a broken Spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

Acts 3. 19.

*Deus non
insundit
oleum mis-
ericordie
nisi in vas
contritum.*
Bernard.

6. Should not your hearts be broken for and from your sins, seeing your Repentance will be so pleasing, and so reviving to your even broken-hearted Ministers? Your Repentance will more please God, than all your sins have displeased him. Though your sins have very much displeased him, yet he was loth to depart from you, he hath departed only gradually; But if you will repent he will readily return: in his departure he hath gone as it were a Snails pace, but if you will return, he will return with speed, he will turn towards you, and fall upon your Necks, and kiss you, and not upbraid you with any of your former miscarriages. And O! what a refreshing will it be to your fainting Ministers to see you returning Prodigals? "Believe it, our Chains would be worn as Bracelets and Jewels, and our Exiles would be a Paradise to us, did we see you putting your mouths
" in

But their
Repentance
would ex-
ceedingly
please God
and refresh
his Mini-
sters.

" in the dust, and crying out because of all
 " your Provocations. It is your security,
 " your seeking great things for your selves,
 " your pride, your foolish expectations of
 " our returns, whilst you, and we are so un-
 " fit for such a mercy, that is our greatest
 " burden, and lyes heavier on us than the
 " wrath of any, save of God Almighty.
 " God knoweth, who knoweth the secrets of
 " our souls, that *we* could be contented to
 " be banished from the face of men, so that
 " *you* were delivered from the power of your
 " lusts: If *you* live and stand fast in the faith,
 " *we* live, and though we have nothing, yet
 " *we* possess all things, joying and rejoycing
 " to see your Zeal, your Repentance, your
 " Indignations and Revenges against your
 " sins. But woe is unto us, we fear we have
 " spent our Lungs, our Time, our Studies,
 " our Life in vain upon you, whilst we be-
 " hold your benumbedness, your insensibili-
 " ness of all the tokens of Gods displeasure,
 " by reason of your transgressions. And will
 " you add affliction to the afflicted? Is it not
 " enough that we are turned out of the Vine-
 " yard, where we loved our work better
 " than our lives; Is it not enough that we
 " are cast forth from among our People and
 " Friends to seek bread for our selves and lit-
 " tle ones from door to door? But will you
 " have a greater hand in our misery than any
 " others? Will you lay the greatest load of
 " trouble upon us, whilst others oppress our
 " outward man, will you go on to vex our
 " Spirits?

Spirit? Have pity upon us, O Children! whom we have begotten in the Gospel: you call us your Spiritual Fathers, you did receive us as Angels, yea as Jesus Christ, you would have plucked out your eyes to do us good; O! now what do we beg? not to have your eyes out, but fill'd, fill'd with tears, Gal. 4.15. and your hearts fill'd with sorrow for, hatred and indignation against, your sins? Weep not for us: but weep for your selves: And is there not a cause? Your tears will be our meat and drink: a great part of our joy will arise from seeing your godly sorrow: Hagar was not more refreshed with her fountain, than we shall be to find your heads as waters, and your eyes as fountains of tears, and you weeping day and night for your own and others provocations. Let it suffice you that you have so long grieved us and Christ by your Security, Self-love, Worldliness, Pride, and Passions. O that now the Egyptians, that we have seen among you, may be seen alive no more! Let us not be hastned to our graves by your impenitencies and stubborn departures from God. We are troubled to find still among you and upon you, those very sins, which have laid Kingdoms and Churches waste, and yet you secure: as if the Lord had poured out a Spirit of slumber upon you: those very sins, which overthrew the Churches of Judea and Asia are found among you, and will you not repent, and do your first works? It grieves

"us to the heart to see sins run through you,
 "as water through a Mill, and you regard it
 "not. We beseech you out of love to God,
 "to your own Souls, and to us and our com-
 "forts, that you would *cease to do evil, and*
 "*learn to do well: Be moved with fear, and*
 "*prepare an Ark.* The old world would not
 "believe *Noah*; But the Lord made them
 "to know he was a Prophet of Righteous-
 "ness. We pity your souls, we are trou-
 "bled to see what confidence you put in un-
 "certain Signs and Prognostications, which
 "beget carelessness and security in you, and
 "how little you fear the threatnings of most
 "dreadfull Judgements against those very
 "sins you have lived in: many a sad thought
 "we have about you, whilst we see your
 "sickleness, inconstancy, stupidity, and un-
 "grounded, (because unscriptural) hopes.
 "O! *return, return, repent, repent*; that we
 "may be able to say, *ye are our joy, our Crown,*
our rejoycing in the day of Christ.

Now, or
 never, for
 ought they
 know.

7. And Lastly, *Should not our hearts be*
broken for and from your sins, even by what
may be seen in this Glass, seeing now God gives
you not only time to Repent, but an opportuni-
ty of Repentance, and such an one, as if you
neglect it you may never have the like again?
When time and the means are married and
lodged together (saith one) they beget oppor-
tunity. Now time, and means meet together
 to effect your Repentance. If this oppor-
 tunity be lost, you may never have another:
 and if you should never have any other, your
 case

use is desperate. Opportunities cannot be
 pray'd, or wept back again. *Esa's* instance
 puts it out of all doubt. In Gods opportu-
 nity it is an easie thing to repent; but if this
 opportunity should be lost by you, (which
 God forbid) it may be impossible for you to
 repent, God may justly give you up to Ju-
 dicial impenitency. "It may be God doth
 "now by this Treatise speak home unto thy
 "Soul, now it may be God warms thy heart,
 "now it may be God works in thee good
 "thoughts and desires: Now is thy day of
 "grace; But (to use the words of one of the
 "chiefest of *Englands* late Alarming Preach-
 "ers, with some little variation) If thou let
 "this day pass, thou maist desire to have one of
 "the drops of that blood, that hath been offer-
 "ed to thee, and yet never have it; thou
 "mayst desire to feel one drop of his spirit,
 "that hath knockt at thine heart; and yet
 "go without it: thou maist intreat for one
 "dram of that mercy, that hath been offered,
 "and thou hast rejected; but it shall never
 "be granted to thee: God may clap that fear-
 "full sentence upon thee, *Now* henceforth
 "never grow fruit more on thee, never repen-
 "tance come into thine heart more. If now
 "thou wilt not repent and be converted, the
 "Lord may set it down in his decree, that
 "from this day forward thou maist stumble
 "about thy sins; but shall never get victory
 "over them: thou maist ever be mourning
 "for thy corruptions; but never mourn aright
 "for them: thou maist blunder about repen-
 "tance,

Heb. 12.
17.

See Mr. Fea-
 ners danger
 of deserv-
 ing
 repentance.
 fol. 35, 36.

Ezek. 24.

26.

"tance; but never to do the work. You shall not
 "mourn, nor weep; but you shall pine away in
 "your iniquities. There is many a soul for
 "contemning of God, and not taking up re-
 "pentance, while he may have it, upon
 "whom this plague of God is come, that
 "they are ever repenting, but never able to
 "repent; ever poring upon their sins, but
 "never able to come out of them; they pray
 "and pray against them, but their prayers
 "moulder away under them; for they shall
 "pine away for their transgressions. What is
 "the reason? Why? because I would have
 "purged thee, and thou wast not purged, thou
 "shalt not be purged any more. May not God
 "say to thee thus? Because I have given thee
 "line upon line, precept upon precept, call up-
 "on call; not only outward, but inward
 "calls, ordinance upon ordinance, provi-
 "dence upon providence, book upon book,
 "motion upon motion: Because I have used
 "all means, fair means, and foul means, I
 "have plainly shewed thee thy sins by my
 "Word and Rod, and by this glass; I have
 "awakened thine own Conscience, yea and
 "stirred up, as by other Sermons and Treas-
 "ures, so by this, good thoughts and de-
 "sires in thee; because I would have cleansed
 "thee, and thou wast not cleansed, thou shalt
 "never be cleansed. Is not this a fearful sen-
 "tence? Alas! Thy heart is very hard, and
 "thy Conscience very much seared, if the
 "reading hereof doth not make thee quake
 "and tremble. What shall I say? Now is the

Ezek. 24.

28.

is laid to the root of the Tree. Thine opportunity is now; If thou pass by this Now, thou art gone for ought I can tell; thou maist be cut off presently. O! Neglect not the present Now, lest thou be cut off for ever. Thou art in danger of being presently cut down if thou dost not presently repent. Every tree which bringeth not forth, (in the present time) good fruit, is (even for the present) cut down, and cast into the Fire. I shall conclude with the words of the Apostle, *The Earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon her, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them, by whom she is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: But that which beareth thorns and bryars, is rejected, and burnt up: Beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany Salvation (such as repentance as cannot be separated from Salvation) though we thus speak: yea therefore thus write.*

Soli Deo fit Gloria.

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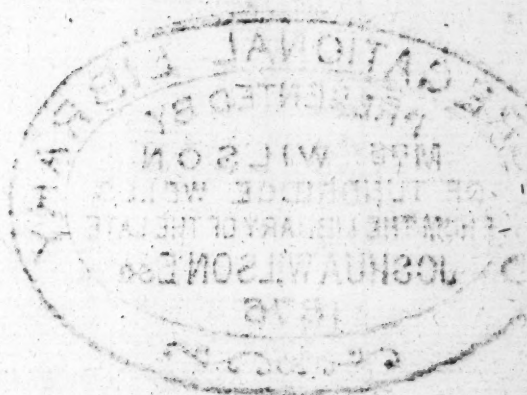
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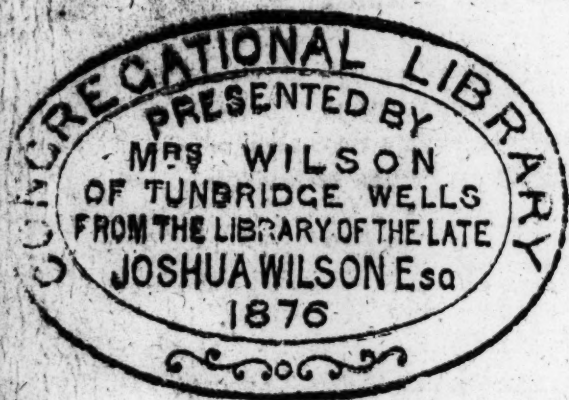
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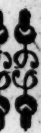
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